Saturday, April 2, 2011 ★★ 16 sections / Vol. 36 / No. 115 / P18 | www.inquirer.net | Mobile Alert: Text INQ to 2899 for 1 week

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS. FEARLESS VIEWS

PRESIDENT AQUINO: "By the authority of the President," the Palace takes no rank: the deputy ombudsman for killing hostage-taker Mendoza's mother for reclamation in Sangguit for Fernando when cash matters, as per the rules, have to be resolved in 3 days upon submission.

GONZALEZ III: Palace ruling conflicts with the Office of the Ombudsman that exonerated Deputy Ombudsman Gonzales for the charge of gross neglect of duty.

# Palace fires prosecutor

## Ombudsman defending her deputy, defies order

By Norman Bordadora and Leila S. Salaverria

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY fired a deputy ombudsman implicated in last year's Rizal Park hostage-taking fiasco—and immediately met open defiance from the Office of the Ombudsman.

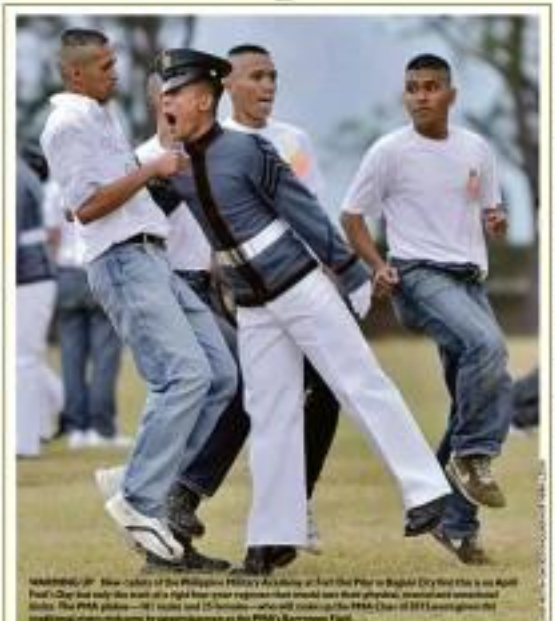
In a 15-page decision "approved by authority of the President," the Palace ousted Emilio Gonzalez III, blaming him for the hostage-taking drama in which eight Hong Kong nationals and the hostage-taker, former Senior Insp. Rolando Mendoza, were killed.

The Incident and Investigation Review Committee (IIRC) that initially looked into the hostage incident found Gonzalez to have "committed serious and inexcusable negligence and gross violation of their own rules of procedure by allowing Mendoza's motion for reconsideration to languish for nine months without any justification."

The Ombudsman office's rules require motions for reconsideration in administrative cases such as Mendoza's to be resolved in five days upon submission.

The Palace also found "substantial evidence" to support the allegation that Gonzalez, deputy ombudsman for the military and other law enforcement agencies, "has failed to exercise the diligence required of his office."

MAIN STORY, A4



MARCHING IN: Nine cadets of the Philippine Military Academy at Fort Del Pilar in Baguio City find this is no April Fool's Day but only the start of a rigid four-year regimen that would see their physical, mental and emotional limits. The PMA plebes—181 males and 25 females—who will make up the PMA Class of 2015 were given the traditional entry welcome by upperclassmen at the PMA's Barrientos Field.

## Sotto: Merci's fate depends also on public opinion

By Christian V. Esguerra

IN THE HILL it will not only be the so-called senator-judges that Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez will have to convince of her innocence.

The way Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III sees it, he and his colleagues, who will sit as judges in the impeachment court, first in the Senate for Gutierrez's trial, will decide Gutierrez's fate based partly on public opinion.

"Public opinion or reaction will play a role on how the issue will be decided," he said.

"In my experience in the last impeachment trial, it was not ideal to view it purely from the judicial perspective, although we were proven right later," Sotto said.

"We need to strike a balance between the judicial and political perspectives," he said.

The last impeachment trial referred to was the aborted trial in 2004 of deposed President and convicted plun...

SOTTO, A6

## Binay thanks P-Noy for his high ratings

By DJ Yap

STILL RIDING on a popularity wave following his high-profile involvement in Filipino migrants' affairs, Vice President Jejomar Binay yesterday thanked President Aquino for the high satisfaction rating he got from the public.

"I am very grateful to President Aquino for his trust and for inspiring us to the Cabinet with his leadership. As I have said, good performance proceeds from good leadership and good policy directions," Binay said in brief statement.

Results of the latest survey conducted ...

BINAY, A6

## US backs PH on China executions

WASHINGTON—The United States on Thursday voiced support for the Philippines after China's execution of three Filipinos on drug charges in defiance of repeated appeals.

"I believe that this is something that we will want to support our Filipino friends on," Kurt Campbell, the assistant secretary of state for East Asia, told Congress in response to questions by Rep. Ed Royce, a Republican whose district in Southern California has many Filipino Americans.

Campbell said he would speak with Philippine officials in coming days.

"It's fairly unusual in Asia when a government makes a very diverse personal, appeal at the very highest levels," Campbell said.

"I think you know how strongly the Philippine government and President Aquino's own Cabinet felt about this issue. To be removed away in such a manner, I think it was a little bit of a surprise to Filipino friends," he said.

But he added that he was not suggesting that the three should have been reprieved.

The Philippine government had pressed China to spare the lives of drug trafficking workers Elizabeth Batain, Ramon Credo and Sally Villanueva, saying they were victims of drug syndicates.

In December, Mr. Aquino said the Philippines had skipped the "ticket

US BACKS, A10

*Teachers on isle with no banks protest pay in ATM*

By Tara Quimpondo

SIYAN ISLAND without a single bank, how could teachers get their pay through ATM?

Teachers in San Fernando town in Siboyan Island, Bonifacio, have rallied on the Department of Education's (DepEd) regional office to defer its plan to pay their salaries through the automated

TEACHERS, A3

## Another Filipino faces execution by hanging, for drugs in Malaysia

ANOTHER Filipino is facing the death penalty in Malaysia on charges of smuggling marijuana, and two more have been sentenced to life imprisonment on drug charges in Thailand.

Aida Dizon Garcia, a 52-year-old college lecturer from Quezon City, is being assisted by the Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, according to Assistant Foreign Secretary J. Eduardo Malaya, spokesperson of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Garcia was reportedly arrested upon exiting a bus from Thailand last November for carrying 11.9 kilos of marijuana worth $5,900 (17,868 ringgit) in her luggage.

A report from The Associated Press quoted Malaysian prosecutor Wan Shaharuddin Wan Ladin as saying that Garcia was traveling as a tourist and that police tracked her bus on a tip.

Garcia pleaded innocent to a count in Malaysia's central Negri Sembilan state on Thursday, Wan Shaharuddin said.

The court allowed Garcia until April 26 to get a lawyer, the AP reported. A conviction

ANOTHER, A10

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

# Labor takes over PAL row

## GSIS trustees ordered arrested

A WARRANT of arrest was issued by a Pasay City judge against nine members of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) board of trustees for the violation of a temporary restraining order (TRO) on a land settlement case.

Sources said police went to the GSIS headquarters in Pasay City last week to serve the warrant, but the GSIS president and eight members on the list were out of the building.

GSIS executives have issued a statement expressing surprise at the Pasay judge's warrant, saying the settlement of the $509 million land case was "a step forward within Supreme Court ruling."

They said the warrant and TRO stemmed "legality irregular."

The warrant was issued by Pasay Regional Trial Court (Branch 107) judge Roberto Hilario on March 2, weeks after the settlement between the GSIS and Rosario Santiago had been executed.

The settlement involves 78 parcels of land with a total area of 3.53 hectares, which includes Pasay coast land earlier sold was wrongfully bestowed.

The RTC ruled in favor of Santiago in 2004, ordering GSIS to refund the lot or pay the fair market value, which was placed at P1.37 billion.

The GSIS brought the case to the Court of Appeals which upheld the RTC's decision but lowered the amount to P509 million. The GSIS then turned to the Supreme Court, which also which ruled in favor of Santiago.

The previous GSIS board under Vilma T. Cruz is asked the high court three times to reconsider its decision, but all motions were denied. A fourth motion by the current board was also dismissed. The ruling became final in Dec. 2010.

Last July 24, after the long court battle, Santiago was finally paid. On Feb. 28, he informed Branch 71—acting with the GSIS—of the settlement.

Two days later, on March 2, Branch 107 issued a TRO at first or of a motion by Ivan Vilar and Harold Cuevas, and directing the GSIS board to refile with Vilar and Cuevas as the contested lots.

Bernard M. Dominguez

## Move effectively stops strike by union

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Tina G. Santos

HOURS BEFORE the strike ban imposed on the Philippine Airlines' (PAL) ground crew union lapsed yesterday, the labor department turned over the case to the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC), effectively averting a work stoppage at the national flag carrier.

Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz yesterday issued a resolution/order, handing over the labor dispute to the NLRC since the issue involved "certain labor practices" and not a standstill in the collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

"The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) cannot assume jurisdiction because what is being raised about is unfair labor practices, not a deadlock in the CBA," Baldoz told the Inquirer by phone last night.

### Same effect

But the notification order has the same effect as the assumption of jurisdiction in the former would also prevent the Philippine Airlines Employees' Association (Palea) from going on strike, explained Baldoz.

Palea cannot push through with its planned work stoppage while the case is being heard by the NLRC, she said.

DOLE also upheld its earlier directive to bring PAL from entering tourist flight attendants who reach the age of 50.

In its ruling, the DOLE secretary affirmed its previous decision favoring the Flight attendants and Stewards Association of the Philippines (Fasap) in its CBA dispute with PAL.

Baldoz also directed PAL to maintain the flight parents who were retrenched while the labor case was being heard.

Before the 10:01 order, Palea members and their supporters marked traffic along Textile Street in Pasay City yesterday afternoon as they marched to Terminal 2 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

### All systems go

Palea members, along with other affiliated groups, announced that it's all systems go for their first nationwide strike since 1998.

"Palea is 100 percent ready for a strike that will paralyze the operations of Philippine Airlines (PAL) in its entirety with the Aquino government in denying workers the right to regular jobs and a collective bargaining agreement (CBA)," said Palea president Dorry Reyes in a statement.

He reiterated that a strike could easily be prevented if PAL heeds their demand to stop outsourcing and open CBA negotiations without preconditions.

Reyes added that operations would resume to near-normal after lifted at 12:01a and Dawn.

PAL will earn $1.6 billion in profit this year, but it refuses to share the fruits of productivity with its employees in a CBA," Reyes insisted.

### Ready for the worst

But PAL yesterday assured its passengers that the national flag carrier is ready for a "worst case scenario" of an actual work stoppage.

In a statement, PAL said it is ready to implement contingency measures to minimize flight disruptions and avoid passengers inconvenience in case a threatened walkout by its ground crew pushes the angle.

"Many PAL administrative employees, and even union members themselves, believe that a strike will not do the company any good. As such, they are ready to man posts in the event by picketing workers," PAL president and COO Jaime J. Bautista said.

"We apologize to our passengers for whatever anxiety and inconvenience threats of work stoppage have spawned. Rest assured we are doing everything we can to ensure that your flights will proceed as scheduled," he added.

Bautista said the planned strike had no legal basis. "First, it's not one that management refuses to bargain collectively. It's a new CBA as declared by Palea. Second, the union's claims that there is no justifiable reasons for the spinoff of three main—airport services, in-flight catering and call center operations—likewise have no leg to stand on," he stressed.

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# Palace defends ₱500-M PU fuel subsidy

By Norman Bordadora

IT WOULD be like spending on something without getting anything in return.

This did President Aquino see for the opposition's for shelling out P500 million for a limited fuel subsidy to public-utility jeepneys to address the continued escalation in fuel prices, against the popular but ultimately unsustainable notion of suspending outright the value-added tax (VAT) on petroleum products.

The government could in the very least have P1 billion a month of forgone revenues if the VAT on petroleum products is suspended, Mr. Aquino said.

"The P1 billion could go to so many things. A billion a month is like how's the minimum comment," the President said. Jesse Robredo where he led the construction of a coal-fired plant.

The interim good deal is compared Mr. Aquino to "the giveaway provided a known spit of the President's remarks.

Mr. Aquino pointed to another fundamental aspect to encourage the price of fuel by removing the VAT as proposed by national transport workers and party-list members.

### The conservation angle

He said it would remove the public's motivation to conserve fuel and the government would lose tax revenues without passing anything.

Explaining the spending behavior of people, the President noted that when faced with rising prices of non-essential goods, the consumer would be to cut spending on these.

"On essential goods like fuel, you would see them according to need. Would be very conscious that there would be no waste," said Mr. Aquino, who is economist said.

"When you lower the price artificially, you lose the motivation to cut down on consumption. Since there are no taxes, the consumer would be to import more. In the end the state would be left with no benefit. It's like spending without selling anything in return," he said.

Mr. Aquino on Thursday ordered that P500 million be set aside from government savings and revenue windfall to cover the increase in the subsidy because of higher fuel prices—he fixed a one-month only fuel subsidy for jeepney and tricycle operators. The subsidy does not extend to buses which were only recently granted a P1 fare hike.

Under the program, the government will distribute "smart cards" to jeepney and tricycle franchisees which, drivers of these vehicles could present to any petrol station in south of the P1 the cost.

"We really don't have control over the price of fuel in the world market. What we can do is really is this direct subsidy," Mr. Aquino said in Iloilo.

He said the assistance program would directly benefit the operators—the operators of public transport and the riding public.

Mr. Aquino said the transport operators have agreed to the fuel subsidy "in face of increasing fares."

### Temporary

He noted that the stakeholders from the Department of Transportation and Communications, Land Transportation Office and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Boards have talked to agreed that the subsidy would be of benefit to them.

In Bilaukdang, Communications Secretary Ricky Carandang said, quoting Energy Secretary Jesse Almendras, the subsidy program would be in place for the next five to three weeks.

Carandang stressed that the subsidy is only a temporary measure.

"We are studying long-term actions which I'm not at liberty to reveal right now, to deal with the volatility in fuel prices," he added.

Legislators of the House of Representatives yesterday said the fuel subsidy granted to jeepney and tricycle operators was not enough to cushion the public against the continued increase in fuel prices.

Zamora Samar Rep. Benjamin Paulino said the program should include other vulnerable sectors in the country at large, like fishermen and farmers who also use fuel for their livelihood—guardian for motorized boats and diesel for tractors.

"It is unfortunate that these sectors are voiceless compared to the groups of jeepney and bus drivers in Metro Manila. This is why many of the time their interests are neglected," Paulino said in a text message.

Deputy Minority Leader Milagros Magsaysay said the subsidy program was a "band-aid" solution—the oil price where the government has been virtually "helpless in keeping the price increases at [unintelligible] level. With Christine Esguerra

# Aquino on ratings dip: Good news doesn't reach public

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Aquino yesterday blamed the drop in his satisfaction ratings on the failure of the good news done by his administration to reach the public.

He said there's a need to improve the dissemination of the information related to what the government is doing for the people.

In its latest survey, the Social Weather Stations said that 66 percent of Filipinos were satisfied with the performance of President Aquino while 16 percent were dissatisfied, for a net satisfaction rating of +52, low, to that his +69 rating in November.

Mr. Aquino lamented the fact that some of the positive developments media his administration had failed to make it to the front pages of newspapers such as the Metro Gulf and Pacific's $10 billion to roadwork and its need for 4,000 engineers that could be filled by those that were displaced from Libya.

### Inside pages

"So we can't blame those that have doubts... They don't get to know. Perhaps, they don't read the inside pages," President Aquino said.

Speaking to reporters in Cebu, Mr. Aquino also downplayed the downturn in the 66 percent's that approved of his performance, saying most of them went to the group of 'unsure' rather than to that of those that disapproved of his performance.

He expressed doubt that 9/4 percent would be upset with his administration. He noted billions of pesos by stopping the economic benefits of elsewhere of state corporations, asked the cases of journalists' killings under his watch and that 400,000 families have been added to the beneficiaries of the conditional cash transfer program.

President Aquino also mentioned the Department of Agriculture's projection that the deficit in rice production next year would only be 300,000 metric tons compared to 1.3 million this year.

### No self-advertising

Mr. Aquino informed his administration had also faced some problems in the department that have been addressed.

"So if we look at what we've done in the past eight months, we've fixed many bad issues. If we have not done anything, it's that we did bad one short just to say we're doing our job," he said.

**Public Satisfaction Rating**
(Vice President, Senate President, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court)
September 2010 to March 2011

| | Satisfied | | | Dissatisfied | | | Net | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sept '10 | Nov '10 | Mar '11 | Sept '10 | Nov '10 | Mar '11 | Sept '10 | Nov '10 | Mar '11 |
| Jejomar Binay (Vice President) | 73 | 69 | 69 | 11 | 11 | 7 | +62 | +57 | +72 |
| Juan Ponce Enrile (Senate President) | 57 | 53 | 62 | 16 | 17 | 10 | +41 | +36 | +52 |
| Feliciano Belmonte (House Speaker) | 54 | 53 | 49 | 24 | 26 | 22 | +30 | +27 | +27 |
| Renato Corona (Chief Justice) | 53 | 53 | 53 | 21 | 23 | 20 | +32 | +30 | +33 |

**Public Satisfaction Rating**
(The government institution)
September 2010 to March 2011

| | Satisfied | | | Dissatisfied | | | Net | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sept '10 | Nov '10 | Mar '11 | Sept '10 | Nov '10 | Mar '11 | Sept '10 | Nov '10 | Mar '11 |
| Senate | 61 | 60 | 65 | 14 | 14 | 15 | +48 | +46 | +50 |
| House of Representatives | 44 | 41 | 46 | 18 | 18 | 20 | +26 | +23 | +26 |
| Supreme Court | 51 | 50 | 53 | 18 | 18 | 20 | +33 | +32 | +33 |
| Cabinet | 62 | 61 | 67 | 13 | 13 | 13 | +49 | +48 | +54 |

# Binay thanks P-Noy for high marks due to inspired leadership

(Continued on page A2)

by the Social Weather Stations (SWS) in March and released yesterday showed that Binay got an "excellent" public satisfaction rating of +74 (81 percent satisfied, 7 percent dissatisfied), up from his +67 rating in November.

"The people's support inspires us to governance to work even more," Mr. Binay said.

Binay, also the presidential adviser on overseas Filipino workers' (OFWs) concerns, attributed his high satisfaction rating to his actions for the welfare of migrant Filipinos.

"President Aquino has made it a priority to look after the wellbeing of OFWs and their families," he said.

"As the presidential adviser for OFWs, I have been devoted to the President to make sure that under his administration, our kababayans abroad will finally receive the service and attention they deserve from their government," Binay added.

In February, his appeal for clemency and visit to Beijing moved China to order the evacuation of three Filipino drug couriers on death row. The six, however, pushed through their scheduled executed Philippine appeals.

Binay also made trips to the Middle East to look into the situation of OFWs there, and to intercede on behalf of those facing charges.

### Top execs also up

Aside from Binay, public satisfaction ratings of other top officials of the Aquino administration have likewise improved, according to the latest SWS survey.

In the First Quarter 2011 SWS Survey, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and House Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. also got higher public satisfaction ratings. Chief Justice Renato Corona also enjoyed a slight increase in his people's public satisfaction rating.

As contrast, another SWS survey released revealed that President Aquino's satisfaction ratings dipped to +51 (69 percent satisfied, 18 percent dissatisfied) in March from +64 (74 percent satisfied, 10 percent dissatisfied) in November.

The Aquino Cabinet received a net satisfaction rating of +54 (67 percent satisfied, 13 percent dissatisfied), up from +49 in November.

### +49 for Senate

The SWS survey showed that 65 percent were satisfied and 15 percent were dissatisfied with the performance of Senate, for a net satisfaction rating of +50, up from +46 in November.

Malacañang scored a +47 rating (60 percent satisfied, 13 percent dissatisfied), up from +7 in November, while Congress got a net satisfaction rating of +46 (68 percent satisfied, 22 percent dissatisfied), a slight improvement from its +7 rating in November.

The same survey also revealed high net satisfaction ratings for top government institutions.

The Senate had a +50 net satisfaction rating (65 percent satisfied, 15 percent dissatisfied), while the House of Representatives scored a +26 rating (56 percent satisfied, 20 percent dissatisfied.)

With 62 percent satisfied and 20 percent dissatisfied, the Supreme Court enjoyed a net satisfaction rating of +33, which is 10 points lower than its +36 rating (70 percent satisfied, 19 percent dissatisfied) in November.

The SWS survey was conducted from March 4 to 7, using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 adult respondents. It had a margin of error of ±3 percentage points. With a report from Inquirer Research

# Teachers on isle with no banks protest ATM pay

(Continued on page A2)

Jeffer Andrew Jardeel of the small islands, saying it would take them up to 12 hours to reach the bank closest to them.

Nazarene Ramirez, principal of Balingasay's Don Carlos M. Magsaysay High School, asked that DepEd return the paycheck system until an ATM is installed on the island.

Rosalina Jai-alim of the town Boac 15 years, said some 400 teachers working on the island's three towns — San Fernando, Magdiwang and Cawit town — would have a hard time getting their salaries as the nearest government service ATM is at the Landbank branch in Odiongan town on the main island of Tablas.

### A day's travel

"You have to travel about 30 nautical miles by pumpboat to Odiongan, and there is no direct ride to the town so it could take you up to a day of travel," Ramirez told the News@Inq phone interview he made.

"We hope they maintain the status quo until the time that they install an ATM here. It's a good project from the disadvantage for us is we cannot get our money when we need it," he said.

According to Ramirez, there are only three authorized outlets on Sibuyan — a pawnshop, a cooperative and a lending firm.

### DepEd memo

Under the current system, teachers assign one colleague from each their districts as the treasurer. Teachers have also made arrangements with relatives in other towns to accept their checks as cash.

In a memorandum dated Feb. 8, DepEd Region 4A (Mimaropa) says entitled district, division and school heads that the payroll system shift must be completed in effect by May 2011 to "remove check printing."

"All personnel without an ATM account will not be included in the preparation of the payroll and will instead be paid like as supplementary payroll from the Division Offices," read the memo.

The memo said those who fail to open an ATM account or one would be paid through a supplemental payroll, but this system could be prone to delays, said Ramirez.

### Long overdue

Teachers were given until April 15 — an extension from the April March 31 deadline — to open ATM accounts.

DepEd Bataan officials said the "ATM-option" of the region's payroll servicing overdue as the department had been aiming to automate payroll distribution nationwide since about six years ago.

Bataan teachers will just have to accept and adjust to the system as it is the most cost-efficient way of releasing their pay, said regional budget and finance division chief Ramon Abrajido.

Other teacher-in-charge/bosses regions and islands have done it successfully, he said, citing Palawan and provinces in Region 10 (Northern Mindanao).

The undersecretary [from concerns] but the advice to us by the higher office is to try to release full ATM payment of the payroll. If has many advantages — you no longer have to print checks," Abrajido said in an interview.

### Smooth transition

Regional accountant Arlene Bonoan said consultations had been held since 2008 to facilitate a smooth transition from the paycheck system to ATM. Landbank has also promised to assist teachers in processing their ATM accounts.

Aware of the "headaches" among teachers, Bonoan said: "The ATM payroll is already being implemented in other regions. There are also other areas that are inconvenience, in the highlands... Perhaps in due time, if this is implemented fully, they'll find a way to [withdraw] their ATM pay."

Prior to automation, Abrajido said the DepEd-Mimaropa office traveled to Romblon that have operating P1.4 million just to print checks for its 20,000 personnel — an amount enough to build two standard classrooms.

DepEd spends up to P6 to print one payroll check. The region has estimated the payroll system for 10 percent of its total costs.

"The bank assured us that we're only once they have clients on the island, they could already install an ATM there," Abrajido said. "You can't invest in an ATM in areas where there are no clients. The clients have to be established first."


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FIRING LINE Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez is flanked by Assistant Ombudsman Jose Arnulfo Casimiro and Assistant Ombudsman Jesus Echaluce in this file photo answering questions from the media.

PRESIDENT AQUINO: Pray tell?

## WHAT WENT BEFORE

ON OCTOBER last year, administrative charges were recommended filed against Deputy Ombudsman Emilio Gonzalez III by the Office of the President for neglect of duty and grave misconduct regarding the case of the late former Batasan Rep. Rolando Mendoza, the gunman in the Aug. 23 Manila hostage-taking incident.

Mendoza, a decorated policeman, was dismissed by the Office of the Ombudsman in January 2010 for robbery and extortion.

During the hostage drama, Mendoza demanded the Ombudsman reverse its decision.

On Sept. 9, Chief Insp. Romeo Salvador, the deputy negotiator in the 11-hour hostage crisis, told the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights (CHR) that during the hostage negotiations, he heard Mendoza berate a "director" in the Office of the Ombudsman, alleging that the official had demanded P150,000 for a review of his case.

Gonzalez denied allegations he tried to extort money from Mendoza.

A report by an investigating panel on Sept. 17 recommended Gonzalez be investigated by the Office of the President. According to the report, Gonzalez did not do enough on the appeal of Mendoza for a review of his case.

The report noted that Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez and Gonzalez "committed serious and inexcusable negligence and gross violation of Duty office's core values of peoriority, which state that a decision for reconsideration in administrative disciplinary cases should be resolved in five days, (while) Mendoza's case (had) languished for nine months."

Gonzalez said then despite the many pending cases before his office, Mendoza's case was not neglected.

Source: DPI Archives, Gil Cabonegro

# Palace fires prosecutor; Ombudsman defies order

From page A1

most agencies, tried to extort P150,000 from Mendoza to reconsider earlier charges that Mendoza was facing.

In view of the foregoing, this office finds Deputy Ombudsman Emilio A. Gonzalez III guilty of gross neglect of duty and grave misconduct constituting behavior of public trust," and hereby meted out the penalty of dismissal from service," Malacañang said.

The decision was signed by Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr. and five other Palace lawyers.

Shortly after the Palace announcement, the Office of the Ombudsman called a press conference, defended Gonzalez and said it would not yet implement the Palace order because it was "not yet final and executory" and was still subject to appeal in the Supreme Court.

The reaction marked the latest episode in what appeared to be a running battle between Malacañang and the Office of the Ombudsman headed by Merceditas Gutierrez, whose removal from office has been openly supported by President Aquino.

Asked if he thought Malacañang was targeting the appointees of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Ambassador Ombudsman Jose de Jesus, the agency's spokesperson, replied: "It's a good question, correct?"

"The judgment on whether the officials of the Ombudsman are being targeted, we will leave it to you," De Jesus said.

### Gonzalez denies

During the Aug. 23, 2010, hostage bloodbath, Mendoza—a veteran police officer—demanded that the dismissal order dismissing him from the service.

He accused an Ombudsman official for demanding P150,000 from him in exchange for a favorable ruling on his appeal but is no consideration of the dismissal order.

Gonzalez denied he had tried to extort money from Mendoza.

The hostage drama, which began when Mendoza seized a busload of Hong Kong tourists, ended in a bloodbath and stained relations between the Philippines and China.

### Substantial evidence

"Likely respondent Deputy Ombudsman was betrayed the trust of Captain Mendoza, the latter would not have been compelled to resort to hostage-taking to exhaust his remedies," the Malacañang decision read.

"In correctly pointed out by the PNP, the Office is duty-bound as long as his motion for reconsideration remained pending and unresolved, Mendoza was also effectively deprived of the right to avail of the ordinary course of appeal to review to challenge the judgment of dismissal before the higher courts," the Palace said.

It added: "With respect to the charge and findings of the PNP, their respective may be further held liable for grave misconduct for allegedly demanding from Mendoza the amount of P150,000, there is substantial evidence to support the same in the light of the circumstances surrounding the incident."

"In the Supreme Court has taught us, only substantial evidence, that is, that amount of relevant evidence which a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to justify a conclusion, is necessary in administrative cases," it said.

The panel also said Gonzalez approached on the jurisdiction of the national police's Intelligence Service over Mendoza's case.

It said Mendoza's grave misconduct case was resolved in just seven months despite the one-year-and-four-month period for all disposition.

"(There) is reason to believe that respondent Deputy Ombudsman had undue interest in the case," the panel said.

### President's authority

Deputy Presidential Spokesperson Abigail Valte said the Office of the President has the authority to remove the Deputy Ombudsman, saying Section Eight of the Ombudsman Act provides for it.

"A dispute or the special prosecutor, may be removed from office by the President for any of the grounds provided for the removal of the Ombudsman, and after due process," Valte said, quoting the law.

### Higher courts

De Jesus, reading from a press statement, said the Ombudsman's office had considered "the matter of Gonzalez' culpability in the hijacking episode so legally final and closed."

"We still not yet implement the decision of the President of the Philippines because this is not yet final and executory," he reiterated.

"What we are saying is that Ombudsman's decision is conflicting with the earlier decision of the Office of the Ombudsman—with all due respect to the decision of the Office of the President—in convicting Deputy Ombudsman Gonzalez from the charges."

De Jesus also said that Malacañang's order was still subject to appeal before the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court.

### Already resolved

De Jesus said that under the law, the Office of the Ombudsman has disciplinary authority over all appointive officials of the government, except over officials who may be removed only by impeachment and over members of Congress or the judiciary.

He said Gonzalez had been investigated by the agency's internal affairs service and that the Office of the Ombudsman, "after due process," found him guilty but decided that his culpability had already been resolved.

He also noted that Malacañang's decision stated that Gonzalez was being dismissed by order of the President for "that if you steal Mr. Aquino who signed the ruling.

He said the agency was issuing it up to Gonzalez to decide on his next move.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said: "We've been actually awaiting for that. I'm glad it has come out. That's out of our recommendations. Finally, it would be a positive point in so far as Hong Kong authorities are concerned, because they are awaiting for action on the recommendations of the DOJ as modified by the Palace legal team." With a report from Aurora Aning

BLOODBATH Members of a special police force begin assault on the hostage-taker, ex-police senior Rolando Mendoza, who killed eight foreign hostages in the city's Rizal Park on Aug. 23, 2010.

# Sotto: Merci's fate depends also on public opinion

From page A1

dent Joseph Estrada.

The trial was not closer when prosecutors walked out after the pro-Estrada senators, including Sotto, voted against the opening of the so-called second envelope believed to contain damaging evidence against Estrada.

Sotto and the members of the pro-Estrada majority maintained that the envelope was not included in the charges against Estrada and as such was not admissible.

After the impeachment court did not resolve was ultimately decided by the people in Edsa.

where the second people power uprising ousted Estrada and brought then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to power.

### Lucas factor

According to some, another factor that could watch Agnes Gutierrez is the return of Sen. Pantilo Lucas, at least from a political standpoint.

Since there are now 22 senators available for the voting, Gutierrez would need eight—not just seven—of them to vote against Enrile's motion for trial.

Regardless of the number of senators present at the trial, 16 votes will still be needed to convict any one of the six articles of impeachment that the House of Representatives filed against Gutierrez.

The impeachment trial will be open to the public and will also be full media coverage, including live television and radio coverage. Reporters are also expected to make heavy use of the social media—particularly Twitter—to provide a blow-by-blow account of the trial.

### No to grandstanding

Senator-judges-hopeful is "play to the TV cameras" or otherwise try to steal TV time will not be tolerated.

The rules adopted by the Senate empower the Senate President, who will preside at the trial, to keep senator-judges, including representatives from the prosecutors and defenses, from any form of grandstanding.

"The Senate President has the full power to cut down any unnecessary acrimonious or vicarious or what we call 'garbage' during the trial," Enrile said.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the trial "could drag on for a year," noting that there are a total of six articles of impeachment, counts, or complaints, against Gutierrez. In the Senate trial, he noted that the Senate could almost three months to cover just two of the four complaints.

"With six articles, it is possible that the trial could drag on for a year, thereby affecting the entire legislative performance of the Senate," he said.

### Amendment sought

Pangilinan sought to amend the impeachment rules to allow a vote after the "presentation of evidence and arguments by the parties on one article of impeachment is completed."

The amendment allows the removal of an impeached official if found guilty of just one article of impeachment by a vote of two-thirds of the senators.

Sotto said the Senate should "ideally" complete the Gutierrez trial within "one month," but admitted the chamber may very well be spending more time to come to the conclusion.

While Congress is in recess, the Senate secretariat and the office of Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile are busy with the physical preparations for the impeachment trial, which will start on May 9, according to Sotto.

He said the Senate has provided P50 million for the trial, to pay for some expenses for food, additional computers and overtime pay of employees.

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# SO THAT THE READERS OF MS. SOLITA COLLAS-MONSOD MAY HAVE THE FACTS RIGHT ON WHY THE PRESENTATION OF THE TESTIMONIAL EVIDENCE OF THE OSG AND THE PCGG WAS TERMINATED BY THE SANDIGANBAYAN ON APRIL 23, 2009

WE WRITE in their columns "Get Real" in the Philippines Daily Inquirer issue of March 26, 2011 regarding Civil Case No. 0033 involving Mr. Lucio C. Tan's and in commenting on the confrontation of the "Resolution" of the Sandiganbayan of April 23, 2009, that gave rise to our commentary which is now reproducing the July 26, 2009 Sandiganbayan's "Resolution-Order" denying the OSG and the PCGG's motion for reconsideration of the April 23, 2009 "Resolution" terminating the presentation of testimonial evidence instead of the Order of the Sandiganbayan given in open court on April 23, 2009. We are now publishing a copy of the relevant portions of the Transcript of Stenographic Notes of the hearing of April 23, 2009 of the Sandiganbayan where it issued the Order in open court.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
**Sandiganbayan**
(Quezon City)

**FIFTH DIVISION**

**REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES,** (Civil Case No. 0033)
(Formerly)
vs.
EDUARDO M. COJUANGCO, JR., et al.,
x-----------------------x

## TRANSCRIPT

of the stenographic notes taken down by the undersigned Judicial Stenographers during the hearing of the above-entitled case held in the afternoon of April 23, 2009 in the session held in the Fifth Division of the Sandiganbayan presided by the Honorable Chairperson and Associate Justices composed of the following:

HON. AMALIA CRISTINA A. FERNANDEZ — Chairperson
HON. ROBERTO A. ABAD — Associate Justice
HON. JOSE R. HERNANDEZ — Associate Justice

**APPEARANCES:** Civil Case No. 0033 - Republic of the Philippines vs. Lucio C. Tan, et al.
**THE PROSECUTION:** (Appearances)
**ATTY. ESTELITO P. MENDOZA:** (Lead Counsel, Team Mendoza) Counsel for the plaintiff
**ATTY. LUIS SANTIAGO:** (Private Prosecutor, Team Mendoza) Counsel for the plaintiff
**ATTY. SANTIAGO:** (Private Prosecutor, Team Mendoza, and Atty. Estelito Mendoza, appearing for the Government through the Presidential Commission on Good Government) Counsel for the plaintiff
**ATTY. CARLOS:** (Lead Counsel, Team Mendoza

# Robredo warns LGUs against making anti-RH laws

By Marian Ramos

THE HEAD of all local government units has spoken.

Barangay councils enacting ordinances banning the sale of contraceptives in their localities sidelined a doctor's prescription are overstepping their authority, according to Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo.

In a memorandum, Robredo advised village as well as provincial, city and municipal councils against enacting local laws to counteract the reproductive health (RH) bill pending in Congress.

He said overseeing the sale of condoms and other contraceptives was "ultra vires," or beyond the powers or authority of local governments to do.

He cited a provision in Republic Act No. 5921 or the Pharmacy Law which stipulates that the Board of Pharmacy "is the exclusive body authorized to regulate, supervise and control the practice of pharmacy in the country."

"In no provision of the Pharmacy Law does it state that such power has been delegated or can be delegated to a different body or agency like the local councils," Robredo said.

The interior secretary issued his directive after the barangay council of Ayala Alabang in Muntinlupa City prohibited the sale of condoms and other contraceptives in their locality without a physician's prescription.

Bernie barangays in Batangas City, Batangas, passed suit and adopted a similar ordinance.

Robredo said ordinances enacted by local councils should not contradict the Constitution or other existing laws and "must not be unfair or oppressive."

"[They] must not be partial or discriminatory and must be general and consistent with public policy," he added.

Robredo said only the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was "vested by law to ensure the safety and quality of food, drugs, devices, household products and other health products."

"The FDA is the proper agency to classify whether a drug or chemical product or device is indeed capable of providing abortion or preventing conception and to determine what drugs and devices can be sold with or without a prescription," he said.

The RH bill would mandate the government to provide for free to the public artificial means of birth control and to include in the grade school curriculum sex education in private.

It has caused intense debate between its proponents and those who are opposed to it. The local Catholic Church has taken a staunch anti stand, saying it goes against the biblical injunction to "go forth and multiply."

Legislators and other backers point to the country's population growth and increasing poverty as reasons to enact the bill into law.

## Correction

EDITOR MAR. 30 ISSUE, the "Biz Buzz" column on Page B2 of the Business sections... "Uniquely" assume"... misstated the amount of San Miguel Corp.'s capital. The group's capital is P466 billion, not P286 billion.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Atty. Joel Reyes, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Riverside Drives, Makati City, fax nos. 897-97-50/98; e-mail address: reyesjoel@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to the Publisher e-mail address: jl.yuchengco@inquirer.com.ph or fax them at 897-97-92-96. Atty. Teo Antolihao, his phone number is 897-0000 local 8000.

## THE DAILY GOSPEL

APRIL 1 (Saturday)
Psalter: Week 2
3rd Week of Lent o Feria/o of Paschal
Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106; Jn 5:31-47

If it starts I doubt, and I test and flee.
Lit Reading: Hos 6:1-6

Come, let us return to Yahweh,
He who maimed us is present, will heal us as well; he has cut us down, but he will bind up our wounds.
Two days later he will bring us back to life; on the third day, he will raise us up, and we shall live in his presence.
Let us strive to know Yahweh.
His coming is as certain as the dawn; his judgment will bear forth like the light; he will come to us as showers come, like spring rain that waters the earth.
"Ephraim, what shall I do with you? O Judah, how shall I deal with you? This love of yours is like morning mist, like morning dew that quickly disappears.
This is why I smote you through the prophets, and have slain you by the words of my mouth.
For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice; it is knowledge of God, not burnt offerings."
Gospel Jn 10:19-34

Jesus told another parable to some persons fully convinced of their own righteousness, who looked down on others. "Two men went up to the Temple to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and said: 'I thank you, God, that I am not like other people, grasping, crooked, adulterous, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give the tenth of all my income to the Temple.'
"In the meantime the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'
"I tell you, when this man went down to his home, he had been set right with God, but not the other. For whoever exalts himself will be brought low, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."
Reflection:
Admit God, that I am not like other people, grasping, crooked, adulterous, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give the tenth of all my income to the Temple.

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# Closed Villanueva house opened for wake

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
Inquirer Northern Luzon

ECHAGUE, Isabela—The house of Sally Villanueva had been closed since she was arrested and detained in Xiamen, China, on drug-trafficking charges in 2006.

But with the help of her neighbors, it was reopened and cleaned on Thursday in preparation for the arrival of her remains next week. She was cremated by tribal rajestos in Xiamen on Wednesday.

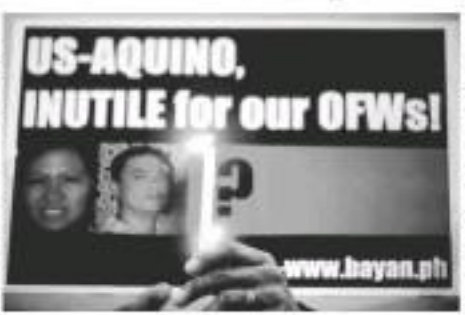
The Villanuevas decided to hold Sally's wake at the house in Barangay Gombaman, and not at the ancestral residence in Sa-Bang Barangay Tapao in Jones town, which is difficult to reach because of the terrain and poor road conditions.

The community has been awaiting the arrival of Sally's parents, Cresencio and Natalina Dellanatu, her sister Marisol, and her brother Jaynar, who were among those who saw Sally before the was held for detention in China.

The Dellanatus took a bus for the 10-hour trip from Manila to Echague on Thursday morning.

Sally's children—Princess Shiny, 12, and brothers, 14—are still in Tapao.

The community has also been awaiting for the arrival of Sally's estranged husband, tourist bus driver Hilario Villanueva.




**BLAME GAME** A left-wing supporter lights a candle as he holds a placard outside the home of a donor of Sally Villanueva, one of the two Filipinos executed in China for drug trafficking, in Quezon City on Wednesday night. AFP

Hours before Sally's execution on Wednesday, Hilario traveled to Santiago City purportedly to attend the wake of a colleague.

### Simple woman

For the Villanuevas, Hilario's absence was no big deal. They said he is almost always away because of his work.

Neighbors fighted candles in front of the Villanueva house and offered prayers and words of sympathy.

According to neighbor Lolad. de Jesus, the Villanueva stayed in Gombaman from 2003 to 2006. Hilario said the children moved to Tapao when Sally was jailed in China.

Jaynar described Sally as a simple woman with a simple dream: To provide her children a good future.

When Sally lived in Gombaman, she sold barbecue and tended to her small sari-sari store, according to Vilma Salvo, the local parish chair.

Salvo recalled that Sally's family had difficulty paying the monthly dues to cover the amortization of the house to international charity organization Habitat for Humanity.

Another neighbor, Clevie Rivera, said Sally left her house only to get supplies for her store.

### Suitcase

Sally worked as a maid in Macao in 2006 before she decided to become a subsidy for cross-border telephone cards in Xiamen.

Before flying to Xiamen, Sally was allegedly told by her recruiter, Tina Cauyan, to carry a suitcase purportedly meant for her Chinese employers.

The luggage contained 4.11 kilograms of heroin, which Chinese airport authorities seized from Sally on her arrival on Dec. 24, 2006.

Sally's parents have filed charges of human trafficking and illegal recruitment against Cauyan, who is also known here as Mayor Cortez.

The Department of Justice has indorsed to the Ombudsman that the preliminary investigation was concluded on April 1, according to Sally's brother Jaynar.

Cauyan was arrested in February by the National Bureau of Investigation but she was not detained. NBI officials have said they were confident she could again be arrested once the DOJ filed the charges against her.

## *Credo ma identifies his recruiters, will file charges*

THE FAMILY of Rainier Credo, one of the three Filipinos recently executed in China for drug trafficking, has sought the help of the National Bureau of Investigation in pointing after his recruiters.

Lawyer Jesus Josephus Galicia, head of the NBI Action, Arrest and Intervention Division, told reporters yesterday that the family had provided "leads."

"We have reasons [to] uncover local fronts set by unscrupulous people in our operations," Galicia said.

He likewise begged off from naming the family members who met with him at the NBI "on their request for their safety."

Galicia nevertheless said Credo's mother and two of his cousins had submitted sworn statements identifying Credo's recruiters.

He said his team was gathering necessary documents and evidence preparatory to charging the recruiters with transporting illegal drugs in violation of Section 5 of Republic Act No. 9165, Anti-Illegal Drugs

# US backs PH

From page A1

Penn Pilot ceremony for Chinese president Hu Jintao in hopes of persuading Beijing.

The United States has a long-standing alliance with the Philippines, a former U.S. colony. A number of Asian nations have recently sought closer ties with Washington amid concerns over a rising China.

### Open communication

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in Manila was not immediately where asked yesterday to comment on the expression of support issued by the US assistant secretary of state for East Asia.

"Filipino diplomats talk with US diplomats all the time, in the same manner that we talk with Chinese and other countries' envoys. And we think there's much value in keeping lines of communication open," DFA spokesperson Z. Edwards Malaya told the Inquirer in an interview.

Malaya said the Philippine government's position on capital punishment was clear: "Our courts by law do not impose the death penalty anymore. To the extent possible, we encourage other countries not to impose the death penalty as well. But that is, of course, for them to decide."

Most US states still impose the death penalty, a conviction is more among Americans.

Malaya said the execution of the three Filipinos in China only underscored the necessity of the drug menace and the need to address it in a "holistic and comprehensive manner."

"We believe that, like a doctor, we need to not only look at the symptoms; it's more important to address the illness itself," he said, adding:

"We believe that the carrying out of the death penalty on Wednesday was but the symptom of the larger infection. That's why we need a comprehensive and holistic approach toward curing the disease."

Malaya also said "cooperative endeavors may be explored with the US and other partners on preventive and law enforcement measures, including possible joint police operations against international drug smuggling syndicates."

"Further cooperation on poverty alleviation measures can likewise be discussed, in order to address the often economic root causes of the problem," he said.

### No laughing matter

President Aquino himself said he would not stop seeking clemency for Filipinos on death row overseas.

"We will continue to make appeals with regards to any citizens, we will try to exhaust all possible remedies that they may be spared the death penalty," he told reporters in Iloilo where he inaugurated a coal-fired power plant.

Mr. Aquino said Filipinos were facing the death penalty not only in China but also in other countries "for so many different reasons."

He said that while "we, as a country, have abolished the death penalty as a recourse in our dealing with criminal elements," other countries have different ways of dealing with the drug problem.

"In our country, our problem with drugs is also its laughing matter," he said.

Mr. Aquino said he had directed Justice Secretary Leila de Lima to look into the low conviction rate among drug cases in the country.

He said there would be a permanent justice undersecretary to oversee such cases.

The President said it had reached his instruction that executive provincial prosecutor was focusing "people suspected as engaged in drugs."

"It is now under investigation; he will go through the process. But, if it is proven, I will not say that he is dismissed from the service and that every [possible] sanction will be [imposed]," Mr. Aquino said.

He said it would be "the first case to show everybody how serious we are with this [problem]."

### Chinese poachers

In Manila, the Chinese Embassy said the case of six Chinese fishermen caught poaching in Philippine waters should not be linked to the Wednesday execution of the three Filipinos.

"The issue involving the Chinese fishermen is a different case," Ethan Sun, the embassy spokesperson and deputy chief of political section, said in a text message to the Inquirer.

"We are still checking on the details. We hope that the issue would be addressed in an appropriate manner," Sun said.

He did not respond to questions on whether China expected Philippine law enforcement to forbid bodies to take a retaliatory stance toward Chinese nationals facing charges in the Philippines.

On Thursday, Agence France-Presse reported that Philippine authorities had vowed to seek long jail terms for the six Chinese fishermen caught poaching fish and sea turtles, as part of a crackdown against foreigners stealing local marine wildlife.

The report quoted Maj. Gen. Jesus De Ocampo, the head of a multiagency task force against illegal activities, as saying that he planned to take a hardline stance against all foreign poachers, unlike previous officials who had released them to be released.

In earlier years of Chinese poachers caught in Philippine waters, the Chinese Embassy has successfully lobbied for their release.

The DFA declined to comment. Reports from AFP, Bloomberg, Associated Press and Agence France-Presse

# *Another Filipino faces death for drugs*

From page A1

carries the mandatory penalty of execution by hanging.

The Star/AFP reported that the charges were read to Garcia by a Filipino consul interpreter.

Through the interpreter, Garcia asked for a court-appointed lawyer, claiming she could not afford one.

### Help from embassy

Only last Wednesday, three Filipino drug dealers convicted of drug trafficking in China—Elizabeth Batain, Ramon Credo and Sally Villanueva—were executed by lethal injection despite pleas from the Philippine government for a commutation of their death sentences.

"The Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur is aware of the case and currently extending assistance to Ms Aida Ilham Garcia," Malaya said yesterday.

Foreign Secretary Alberto del Rosario had paid a visit to Malaysian Foreign Minister Jauzist Anifah Aman at his office in Putrajaya, Malaysia, but it was not clear if Garcia's case was brought up.

"The two foreign ministers discussed matters of mutual interest, notably the preparations for the 7th Philippine-Malaysia Joint Commission Meeting to be held mid-April in Manila," the DFA said.

### All in That jails

The life terms meted out to two Filipino women convicted of drug charges in Thailand were requested by Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Javier Colmenares on Thursday.

He identified the women as Issy Manuntag, who was sentenced only on Wednesday, and Flory Mae Talabon.

The party-list lawmaker sent on a three-day visit to Thailand to look into the plight of Filipinos in various prisons in that country.

There are 85 Filipinos in prisons in Thailand, 23 of whom are detained for being drug couriers, he said.

Colmenares viewed the Filipinos in the Bangkok Correctional Institution for Female Offenders together with Talabon's parents.

"Even if it is unfortunate that they were given such a harsh sentence, it is a relief that at least it was not a death sentence considering that we are not even sure that they are actually guilty of drug trafficking," Colmenares said in a statement.

He said Talabon spoke of "how she innocently brought in an encyclopedia upon the request of an African, Francis Ifeni, who befriended her and who later turned out to be a member of an international drug syndicate."

Colmenares also mentioned Estrella Basilio, 55, who was sentenced to 25 years in a Thai prison "for bringing in what she thought were dying mannequin heads but eventually found out to be cocaine."

He said Basilio had retired from her job in the Philippines, "lured, through the Internet, with a promise of office work in a casino with a P1,200 monthly salary."

Colmenares said Basilio had "spoken strongly against guns" in the charge of drug trafficking.

He said her case once more raised the need to increase the budget for legal assistance to Filipinos abroad, which had been reduced by the Aquino administration.

### P500M needed

Colmenares said Bayan Muna would fight for a bigger legal assistance budget to help Filipinos languishing in jails in different countries, particularly those who were wrongly arrested.

"It is unthinkable for a Filipino to suffer like imprisonment or even the death penalty without the necessary legal support, especially since most of them are completely victims of drug syndicates," he said, adding that a budget of at least P500 million would "definitely be proposed."

Colmenares raised the need to assign lawyers from the Public Attorney's Office to Philippine embassies in countries with a large number of Filipino workers.

There must be counsel to advise the accused, especially in when the cases proceedings are in a foreign language, he said.

"We must be proactive here," he said. "We cannot wait for another death sentence to be carried out, such as those in China, before we act."

Colmenares has authored House Resolution No. 858 calling for a congressional investigation of Filipinos languishing in prisons abroad, and identifies they were given the necessary legal assistance before they were convicted.

### Reciprocal punishment

In Bill on proposed legislation, Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez said his brother, Misamis Oriental Rep. Maximo Rodriguez, are preparing to file a bill that will impose "reciprocal" reciprocal punishment on foreigners convicted of drug trafficking in the Philippines.

"This situation on the death penalty is inequitable and unfair," Rufus Rodriguez said in a phone interview. "There are many Chinese nationals convicted of drug trafficking in the country but we cannot execute them, like what was done to the three Filipinos recently. If we do not correct this soon, we are in danger of being a haven for drug financiers and transshipment points for foreigners because the penalty here is not as severe as in their home countries."

The death penalty was outlawed in the Philippines some five years ago.

The Rodriguezes' bill seeks to amend Section 51 of Republic Act No. 9165 (or the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002) with this sentence: "If the violator of any of the provisions of this act is a citizen, the penalty to be imposed shall be the penalty prescribed by their national law for the act committed or the penalty prescribed by this act, whichever is higher."

"The penalty of death, if applicable, shall be imposed despite the prohibition of the imposition of the death penalty in the Philippines."

The bill also seeks to require an agreement with ASEAN (or an Act Prohibiting the Death Penalty in the Philippines).

In the explanatory note, the Rodriguezes said: "While there is no reason to question the laws of foreign countries, the reason behind the imposition of the harshest penalties that their national law imposes."

*Reports from Ely Saez, Cynthia D. Rebaya and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

**LIKE OF MARIJUANA** Aida Ilham Garcia of Quezon City is taken away by the Malaysian police after she pleaded not guilty to drug trafficking charges at the Seremban High Court in Malaysia on Thursday. AUSTIN HOSPITAL VIA THE STAR/AFP

# Spare us from cleanup, Manila Bay squatters urge high court

By Jerome Aning

SIX SMBAY poor group has called on the Supreme Court not to allow what it claimed was the illegal demolition of dozens of squatters living along the shores of Manila Bay and its major tributaries after the national cordoned government agencies to clean up the bay last month.

The Urban Poor Associates and other militant groups told the Supreme Court that it should ensure that all demolitions and evictions of squatters living on or along the bay complied with Republic Act No. 7279 or the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992.

The groups pointed out that RA 7279 required that a 30-day notice be given to urban poor whose homes were to be demolished. They added that the law also prohibited demolitions of families without consideration with affected residents and their relocations, and that without such compliance, no demolition or eviction should take place.

"The effort to clean up Manila Bay should not be at huge heads with the basic human rights accorded to the underprivileged and homeless citizens guaranteed by no less than the Constitution itself," UPA lawyer Ricky Esparcilla said in the petition.

The high court, in a decision on July 15, ordered the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to come up by June 30 with the lists of squatters living along the shores of Pasig, Marikina, San Juan, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Zapote, Navotas, Malabon, Tullahan and Tenejeros, all of which directly or indirectly drain into the Manila Bay.

The SMBA was also tasked to submit a plan for the removal of the squatters and the demolition of their shanties, which should be fully implemented not later than Dec. 31, 2011.

The Court also gave the same instructions to the local governments of Bulacan, Laguna, Batangas and Cavite in relation to the squatter communities along the Meycauayan, Marilao, Obando, Talisay and Parañaque rivers which also drain into Manila Bay and for those on Laguna de Bay and its connecting waterways.

The Manila Bay cleanup case stemmed from the suit filed by the Concerned Residents of Manila Bay led by lawyer and environmental activist Antonio Oposa Jr. before the Caraballo Regional Trial Court in 1999.

The group had lamented the government's continued neglect in cleaning up the bay which is famous for its scenic sunset view. It is also the country's busiest port and considered the finest harbor in the Far East.

The group won a landmark Supreme Court ruling in 1999 that ordered 32 government agencies to clean up Manila Bay, the country's largest port, and regularly report their progress to the Court.

On Monday, Oposa filed a new civil action against 30 individuals who failed to comply with the Supreme Court's ruling.

"I will withdraw the suit if they (govern-

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# Lacson asks court to keep Mancao on list of accused

By Jeannette I. Andrade

CITING the same Court of Appeals ruling that initially absolved him, Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday asked a Manila court to hold in abeyance the dismissal of former police colonel Cesar Mancao III's discharge as an accused in the Dacer-Corbito double murder case until after the ruling on Mancao's credibility as a witness is awaited with finality.

In the same position paper filed by lawyer Rico Pobladot in his behalf before the Manila Regional Trial Court (RTC) branch 18, Lacson asked the court to deny the motion to discharge Mancao as a state witness, claiming the latter's statements against him has now been substantiated and "has in fact been rehearsed."

In its March 15 resolution, the Court of Appeals' Sixth Division ruled that Mancao remained himself under oath on material points of the case. It also resolved that his inconsistencies and material contradictions affected his credibility.

It was Mancao's testimony before the Manila RTC branch 18 that implicated Lacson in the 2000 murder of publisher Eduardo Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito.

"A person cannot be useful as a witness when a higher court (Court of Appeals) has already ruled that he is not a credible and trustworthy witness. A testimony from a person without any credibility would have no probative value," the petition paper said.

Lacson stressed that the Court of Appeals' ruling could not be disregarded by the Manila RTC under the principle of hierarchy of courts.

"In the present case, the proceedings on the discharge of Mancao should be held in abeyance pending the finality of the Court of Appeals ruling. To continue the proceedings would be to act as if the Court of Appeals' pronouncements on Mancao's lack of credibility have no bearing at all on his discharge as a state witness," Lacson said.

Lacson's co-accused in the case, Thomas Ramiscal, Ognorome Pacificador, Rommel Ballesteros and Raymond Mendoza, have also sought the denial of Mancao's discharge as one of the accused to enable him to be a state witness based on the same appellate court's ruling.

# Sandigan acquits Customs exec of graft

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SANDIGANBAYAN anti-graft court has cleared a customs deputy commissioner of corruption charges, stemming from a compromise agreement he had entered into with the Steel Asia Manufacturing Corporation over the latter's tax delinquencies.

Ed Yuhico, a former deputy commissioner at the Bureau of Customs, and Steel Asia president Antonio Lorenzana were both acquitted of charges that they had violated the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

The two were charged for allegedly entering into a corruption deal that would have given the government less than what it could have been awarded at all. Such is pure speculation," it said.

There was no way of telling, if the cancellation in the agreement were manifestly disadvantageous to the government, if Steel Asia reaped unwarranted benefits therefrom, the court said.

"The compromise agreement on its face does not indicate that the government would stand to lose more than it could gain from the said compromise agreement. The allegation that the conditions were unduly favorable to Steel Asia is fatuous," it said.

The court noted that the agreement was through (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas) approved, which required Steel Asia to pay its liabilities in 18 months instead of 36 as originally agreed.

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# AFP to consolidate HQs of 3 services

By Dona Z. Pazolagutan

THE ARMED forces of the Philippines (AFP) is pursuing plans to consolidate the headquarters of the three major commands—Army, Navy and Air Force—in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr. said yesterday.

Oban said having a single military headquarters would be more efficient.

The move could pave the way for the commercial lease of some prime properties of the AFP to raise funds for military modernization although Oban was noncommittal about it.

"As of now our efforts are towards not selling (Camp Aguinaldo) but to have a single headquarters that will relocate the headquarters of the Philippine Army, the Philippine Air Force and the Philippine Navy," Oban said in an interview over dzRH Friday.

"By colocating all these headquarters with the general headquarters, we expect that the system will be run more efficiently," he added.

Oban, who started his misunderstood

# Banco Filipino, BSP execs swap charges

BSED-TUTED of the recently shuttered Banco Filipino savings bank (BF) and officials of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) filed cases against each other at the Department of Justice (DOJ) yesterday.

BF executives and stockholders accused the officers of the BSP and the Monetary Board (MB) of graft in the "wrongful closure" of the 44-year-old savings bank.

Charged were BSP governor Amando Tetangco Jr., deputy governors Nestor Espenilla Jr. and Juan de Zuniga Jr., who is also the BSP general counsel, and MB members Juanita Amatong, Alfredo Antonio, Ignacio Bunye and Jose Pardo.

BF said the central bank officials caused "undue injury to BF, its stockholders and depositors through manifest partiality, evident bad faith and gross and inexcusable negligence when the BSP and the MB refused or failed to act on BF's application for emergency loans and thereafter ordered the closure and receivership of the bank."

### Knowingly caused damage

Mary Ahad and Francisco Rivera, BF executive vice presidents, and Mary Lou Siaquiot, representing 23 majority stockholders, signed the 40-page complaint against the BSP and MB officers.

BF lawyer Hermino "Harry" Bueno Jr. said Tetangco and the majority of the MB members, "knowingly caused damage" to the bank when it ordered its closure last month.

He said BF had asked for emergency loans from the BSP following days of negative publicity, which bank executives believe were fed to the media by the BSP officials themselves, resulted in a bank run.

"The BSP ordered the closure of the bank, denying rehabilitation. What is deliberately failed to state was that BF in the first place, had been under the BSP's comprehensive audit that every peso implemented by the bank was done with the knowledge and approval of the BSP," Bueno explained.

On the other hand, the BSP immediately filed counter charges against BF officers and directors later yesterday afternoon.

A BSP lawyer said these named respondents were BF president Teodoro Asensio Jr., Ahad and director Perfecto Yasay Jr.

The criminal charges filed by the BSP included "willful refusal to file audited financial statements for the years 2002 to 2007; falsification and issuance of false statements to hide the true financial condition of the bank; willful refusal to report losses; the commission of willful refusal to comply with several BSP laws and directives, including refusal to submit a plan of reduction of management consultants; and willful refusal to cease the conduct of unsafe, unsound and unsound bank practices.

### Unsound banking practices

"The criminal charges that the bank officers are now facing gives the public a glimpse of the unsound banking practices that inevitably led to the BF's closure. More than half of the bank's loan portfolio was allocated to the directors, officers and other related entities of the bank, some of which the bank deliberately refused to report to the BSP as required by law. Most of these loans became past due and remain uncollected to this date. This resulted in operating losses, which the bank concealed through the falsification of bank reports," the BSP said.

The BSP added that BF also spent as much as P163 million in one year for the payment of management consultants "and refused to reduce the number despite an express BSP directive to do so." Jerome Aning

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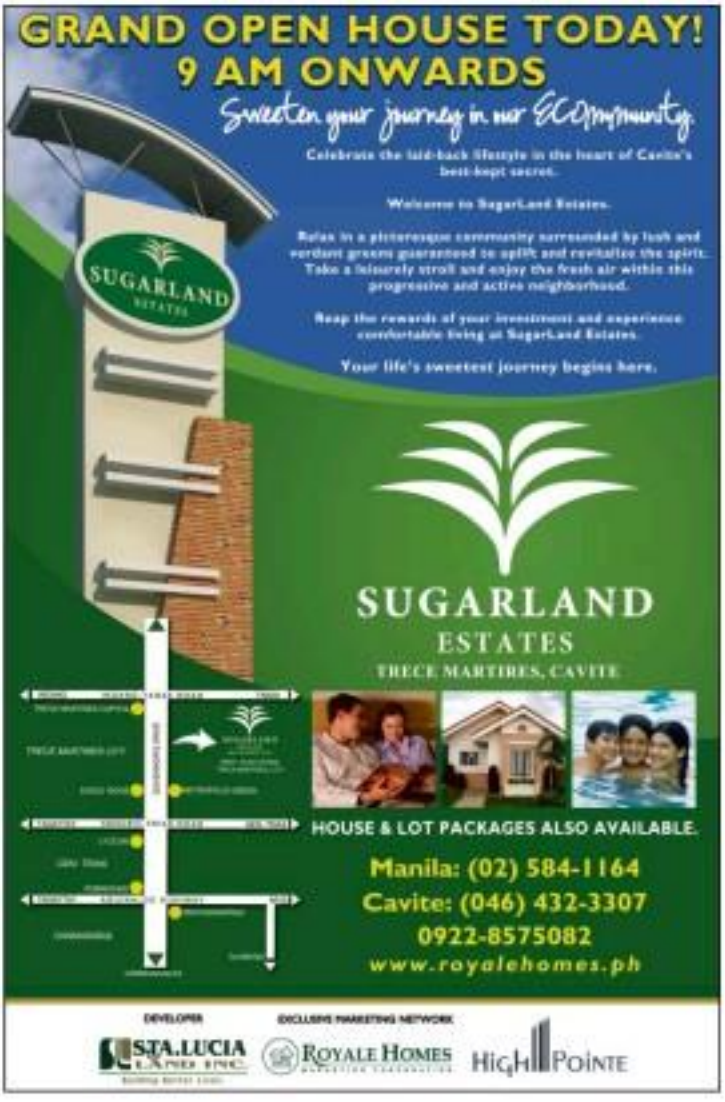



# Live on video: P-Noy, kids talk on water

A RIGHT TIME video conference between President Benigno Aquino and children from "waterless municipalities" was facilitated by Manila Water Company Inc. during World Water Day.

The "meeting," which highlighted the observance of the Philippines' first ever World Water Day on March 22, was conducted between the President at 10:00 AM at Sta. Ana Elementary School in Legazpi City and at AM 10:00 in Cagayan de Oro City via live video streaming using Smart's broadband technology.

"We know that we're not the only ones who experience difficulties obtaining drinking water, so we thank you for this chance to talk to you about our situation," said Lyra Izabela Inclando of Labason, Camarines Sur.

Speaking from Legazpi, Inclando said water from their community's well was salty and unsafe, causing illness especially among infants and the elderly.

"Maligaya, Mr. President," he said.

Shweta Silap Lopez of Pasong Camachile, Santa, said she and other students had to rise before dawn and walk long distances daily to collect water.

At times, they use the water in canals to wash their clothes, Lopez said, adding: "We buy safe drinking water from the town of Tarlac, but that's quite expensive for our family."

Shaira del Puerto of Bukidnon, Aspire Institute of Mindanao Dominated and Kapatan Bangsa of Misamis Oriental also "met" with the President and other officials through live video streaming.

In response, Mr. Aquino said: "Despite the many challenges, we are intensifying efforts to reach our ultimate goal of allowing each and every Filipino access to safe and clean drinking water.

"As we worked to enhance the delivery of water in 26 waterless municipalities in 12 provinces, we not only increased the projected investments in water supply for our service communities, we ultimately improved their health and sanitation," he said.

World Water Day is part of the Millennium Development Goal-Fund joint program of local and international agencies.

Smart is one of the companies supporting government institutions, international groups, the academe, civil society and the private sector in the campaign to ensure delivery of clean water to 1,222,000 households in waterless municipalities nationwide.

In a speech during the event, PLDT and Smart Public Affairs Group head Ramon Isberto said: "We underestand the plight of these who live in localities with (no immediate) supply of clean drinking water.

"Smart, through its parent company PLDT, is fully supporting the initiatives that aim to bring clean drinking water...a basic human need—to every Filipino."

INQUIRER

# OPINION

## Hurt by corruption

**EDITORIAL**

MEMBERS OF the Armed Forces of the Philippines are quite understandably disheartened—and resentful—at the results of the most recent survey putting the AFP at the very top of the list of most corrupt agencies. Until Lt. Col. George Rabusa, the former AFP budget officer, started talking of multimillion-peso welcome gifts and going-away presents for former AFP chiefs of staff as well as frequent foreign trips and allowances of some military wives, the AFP was nowhere near the traditional centers of corruption, like the Philippine National Police with its kotong cops, or the Department of Public Works and Highways with its multimillion-peso kickbacks or the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue with their high-living officials. In the 2009 corruption survey done by Pulse Asia, for example, only 8 percent of the respondents identified the AFP as the most corrupt agency, compared to 32 percent for the DPWH and 21 percent for the PNP. But in Pulse Asia's latest survey, done last weeks Feb. 24 and March 6, 48 percent said the AFP was the most corrupt among them all, while 26.8 percent said it was the PNP and 10.2, the DPWH.

The spike in the number of respondents identifying the AFP as most corrupt can be explained by the extensive media coverage of the congressional hearings on the plea bargain agreement between the Office of the Ombudsman and former AFP comptroller Carlos F. Garcia that led to Rabusa's shocking revelations about massive misuse of military funds. The same survey showed that 81 percent of the people surveyed were aware of Rabusa's exposé.

Probably even more disturbing to the military leadership is that this unflattering view of their organization is not confined to a gullible mass greatly influenced by the mass media. Even foreign businessmen, who are supposed to be more discerning, share that view. In another survey, conducted by the Hong Kong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) from November 2010 to February 2011, expatriate business executives gave the AFP the worst rating among Philippine institutions: a grade of 9.20 on a scale of 0 to 10, where the more corrupt gets the higher grade. The same PERC survey results published in BusinessWorld gave a grade of 8.57 to the BIR and 8.89 to the PNP.

Of course it's unfair to condemn the entire AFP for the evil that a few corrupt officers have done, but its members should do more than just bewail their misfortune. The AFP's reputation is in tatters and its officers and men should now work together to repair it. That doesn't mean trying to discredit Rabusa and those who have backed his testimony, but rather encouraging others who are in the know to expose other corrupt deals and practices. It requires jarring those budgetary processes and procedures that make it easy to divert public funds into private pockets. And it demands that those who dipped their fingers into the military budget be punished to the full extent of the law.

With public attention focused on it, the AFP has become a good place to start the war against corruption that President Aquino pledged to carry out during his administration. Rabusa said it was the President's sincerity that emboldened him to come out with what he knows about the misuse and misappropriation of military funds. Rabusa's success in bringing to light irregularities in the use of officers' funds could, in turn, encourage other whistle-blowers in other agencies to come forward, setting a snowball rolling. And if the Senate cooperates by removing Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, the single biggest obstacle to jailing the notoriously corrupt, the latter may yet see a real, honest-to-goodness and wide-ranging anti-corruption campaign.

It would be hard to come up with a program that should occupy a higher priority than this. Corruption has already cost the country immensely. PERC says the Philippines "is perhaps the Asian country that has been hurt most by corruption." And it explains how much it has been hurt: "If one looked at the end of World War II as the starting point for modern Asia, the Philippines today should be the richest on a per capita basis in Asia and a leader in many fields." Instead, it has become the laggard among Asia's economies, forced to send its workers abroad because of low pay and lack of employment opportunities. And it remains mired in corruption with a score of 8.9 on the PERC scale, the third worst grade among 16 countries in Asia-Pacific.

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## 1,000 uses

**VIEWPOINT**

*Joan L. Mercado*

SERENITY'S CALL is "the cure of 999 men," and "we'll discover 1,000 uses for the coconut tree," they predict.

The palm towers in 68 of 79 provinces, its kind spanning over 27 percent of agricultural land. From it come food, wine, roofing and—as these dishes show—wood.

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), Mindanao, meanwhile, will soon host foreign exchange, as they did before. Other anniversaries surfaced.

Economic provider Imeldamania for more than 2 million Filipinos. More (4) have degrees and many are in maritime training. Savior in their lives. And you think 1.5 million Filipinos depending on this tree? Then, someone saw a feature in some drenched Fernando Amorsolo paintings.

Coconut farmers elsewhere haven't vacationed across the palm's 1,000th use. Not in the Philippines, we bet. Where?

In 1972. That's when the Marcos dictatorship clamped on Presidential Decree 276, banning others, a discovery that "some levies" were created by coconut "in their private capacities." There, in effect, were individual bans.

If this decree is not scrubbed as unconstitutional, "former President Marcos found a legal and valid way to steal," writer then Senator Aquilino Pimentel Cayetano. He is also a columnist Conrado Jamero.

Decrees like this formed part of the "new society's" so-grande looting. Marcos divvied up the agricultural sector among cronyi followers. The Philippine arms assigned bananas. Rubber, Benedicto's purview. Sugar, Joel Lehuezo's. Coconut, Eduardo Cojuangco emerged as the economic czar.

Did the 304 congressmen who would later fashioned themselves as a "new" break this pecking of a cruel industry? Does anyone remember Senator Joseph Estrada's pledge in August 1998 at the 11th Philippine Coconut Industry Conference? "Coconut farmers would get every centavo of the levy back," he vowed. Stop press or warnings. Right?

Wrong. "One of Presidents Estrada's last acts, before President Benigno S. Aquino III, was to sign Executive Orders 213 and 215. These eliminated various vice Cojuangco Aquino and Fidel Ramos had constructed. (On that declared levies on public funds.

Things deformed via levy—continued to over P1.09 billion—in centavo." This line noted. "It was grand larceny that involved over forgot dozens of kopraserye." Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo dis. ignored the cues (notice renamed to their right. ful owners by the Deinla Supreme Court and Ramalgamation.

"Economic control industry today?" former Ambassador Jose E. Romero asks in his Negros Chronicle column.

Magnate yields and aging plantations exacerbated the mossbud looting, some 15% sometimes and farmer. That institutionalized injustice fanned rebellion. The poverty of farmers boiled into agrarian unrest when the industry became cultivating cancers for the New People's Army in Bicol, Eastern Visayas and Southern Mindanao.

The new Aquino administration should urgently cultivate a "one-in-only-attitude jacket" as reverse the industry's decline, Romero argues.

Specifically, President Aquino ought to withdraw executive from consumer levy-funded sugar cartels, namely: San Miguel Corp., United Coconut Planters Bank, Goodrich and the Coconut Industry Investment Fund. "These companies came from a meager fraction of earnings as shown in the 2009 CIIF foundation, which is supposedly created for the industry's emancipation.

Worse, misattributed tax given to us "to give us back." This penny-pinching glosses over justice. Instead, it is anchored on the Bible "benefactions" of monopolists who invest a centavo in the government so that millions of the levies.

The coconut farmers are supposed to be the beneficiaries of the levies strung from classrooms, they're been "restored to "resident claimants"—after their taxes subsidized some of those firms. UCPB "had to be rescued by Philippine Insurance Development Corp. and GSIS" after heavy trading losses.

Coconut farmers instead of spoon-fed cadasta to P. ling, written on annuity, remedial actions, including optimum use of low-yields.

It is necessary to reinstate subsidizing farmers, Coconut Planters Bank? A mention of blatant presidential decrees, UCPB "lent more of its funds outside the industry." The cartel lent to oil mills. Unveille never invested more coconut farmers as designed to do.

Operating outspoken, in the interim, must not inhibit a patronage of great interest for developmental progress. These can be designed by the Philippine Coconut Authority in consultance with the Aquino administration's own national development plans.

After a management crisis, the Presidentdecided to put low-performing companies on the auction block. P Sixty might—to bid out non-economic assets like San Miguel stocks. Funds can serve farmers' longer interests. These would include, farm-to-market roads to warehousing facilities—and research.

Global competition, in the oil and oilseeds world, are opening to more markets with ever products. These calls from previous century for development research. Bogged down in engaging penetrating our current industry is doomed to perpetually losing to new competitive edge and comparative advantage, Nature's wants.

Decades of plunder impoverished millions of small-coconut farmers. They deserve President Aquino's help to untangle the historical opportunity to restore their unrealized potential.

Corpus Christi. "Seize the day!" This chance won't come again for 9 new babies his term in office can. To echo a line from Winston Churchill's "Battle of Britain" address: "Never were so many indebted so much, to so few."

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## Need for anti-trust law highlighted

**GET REAL**

*Sheila Coronel-Monreal*

UNLESS AGAINST it Bangladesh is a saint, and one doubts whether he would describe himself that), he is unused to defending a pure desire of satisfaction from the FLEETWOOD group. Accustomed to less than 10 years ago, the takeover was supposed to be the other way around—PLDT's finances were shaky and the billions of Indonesia were consumers that selling out, particularly to a friend from the old days, would be best. But Pangilinan successfully defied his own principles.

Of course, now (and Pangilinan's offered plausible reasons not to sell, such as principals undoubtedly must have thanked him for his audacious move. PLDT's financial difficulties are only disappeared, it was a phenomenal rise in its profits. (Remember it must have been for MVP.)

And now, the door is on the other foot, so to speak, although this time, the takeover rumors is considered a hostile one, with the Gokongwei-family acquiring in the dark—and why not, when with a secret, exposed PAL billion financial package (announced not after closer years (again reportedly) of negotiations. The unsolved mystery is now the (broadly) profess. Anyone will be told Lucio Tan, of course, the government deserves a monkey wrench into the deal.

Should it?

Obviously, both the Gokongwei and Tanglines think that the deal is beneficial to them, as it would (or have been struck—what Pangilinan described as a win-win situation. The Gokongwei get 12.8 percent of PLDT (or, one board seat; if the next 10 years ago had gone through, they would have gained two board seats) and have Digitel's debts taken over; plus PLDT purchasing Digitel's new coupon convertible bonds (P20 billion worth, by my calculations). Pangilinan's PLDT gets again a lot of new savings from any number of areas—capital expenditures, consolidation of systems, shared services, elimination of duplications, bulk discounts from purchases, etc.

But what is not as clear is whether it will be equally beneficial to the nine out of 10 Filipinos—and rising—who are still phone subscribers.

For example, it is often ignored, or glossed over that the takeover of Digitel, in particular Sun Cellular, will be taking a share out of the sale of PLDT's biggest, and by that means out of the sale of Globe as well. And that may not be good for the other side of the market—namely us, consumers.

Sun Cellular, from the start of its short founded in 2002 (Hi, was (in this atmosphere) the party to compete, the new blanket, in the form of Globe and Smart. It offered such gems, some-day, cheap deals in the market, which of course reduced its profit margins—but as the same time resulted in a phenomenal increase in its market share, from 5.25 percent in 2005 to 18.25 percent in 2010, (with at the end of the market's new land) granting. The number of its subscribers increased from 750,000 to 16 million during that period. Meanwhile, in the Big Two were placed in the defensive, and had to cut down their profit margins (although Globe was forced to come up with a subsidiary, GOMO, and its first mobile brand, to compete head-to-head with Sun Cellular—apparently not very successfully).

With the takeover of Sun Cellular, the consumers lose their feather-bedder, the one party that was easy on the other consumers' (I deserve some) pressure on prices and kept the industry scrambling to offer better quality. And while we are promised that Sun Cellular will keep its separate identity (see domestic brand for how long, and whether it will remain as innovative and aggressive (does anyone recall when its then owned a of "predatory pricing," in a complete diversion of what the term means?).

We are also assured that "robust" competition will still take place, when with San Miguel Corp. supposedly moving in the wings, and Globe surely proclaiming that it will continue with its market strategy, whatever that is. In the meantime, the fixed line is that the new 70:25 (Digitel advantageous given it a 70 percent share of the market (Smart, Digitel, GOMO, at least in terms of subscribers, giving it enormous amounts and other scale advantages. What we will have until SMC comes in, if it comes (it is effectively a duopoly—two sellers in the market, and the consumer is caught in the middle of them. Are we even playing field. One is one area where Globe can "compete," or whether it will be content to join in a price following, and "acceptance" albeit implicitly with its "price lead-er." In either case, the final result may be an effective duopoly, which is the way it is in all sectors where low entry and higher prices prevail than when the market is competitive.

So back to the question. Should the government throw a monkey wrench into the deal? Well, as it is more than 10 years ago, when Gokongwei seemed to with PLDT, the argument was that he should not be allowed to do so, because there was potential conflict of interest—the same argument that was used when he wanted to get San Miguel Corp. While PLDT is in many ways more diverse in its (now smaller of interest because Gokongwei is no longer a stockholder, that is not to say that there is no conflict of interest because Gokongwei is no longer a stockholder, that is not to say that there is no real danger that the public is going go get stuck with higher prices and less services than is necessary in today's fairly competitive market.

At the very least, President Aquino must be reminded of what he said in his State of the Nation Address: "Rewriting us our Constitution, it is the government's duty to ensure that the market is fair for all. We monopolize, to control that full competition. We serve as fair. Trade Law to give life to these principles ..."

He better get on with it.

# Appreciating collective opinions

SOCIAL CLIMATE

*Mahar Mangahas*

ON THE midst of the many recent news reports on Filipino opinions on governance and other matters, let's appreciate one good feature—ten years back, the country is the cumulation of data we may find by Gary Olivar in 1986—is having open opinion polling avail.

Such access to information about their collective opinions is not available, for instance, to the Chinese people, because their governments does not allow it. Although China has long been doing scientific social science research, all consumer matters, including those used for consumer research, have to be officially pre-approved and approved, too they include any private consumer behavior in the government.

In a genuine democracy, freedom of speech is what paraphernalia serves a preferred right. The citizens are not only entitled to privately assess the performance of their government, but also have the preferred right to disclose their views to opinion pollsters, and opinion pollsters have the preferred right to collect, summarize, and openly publish their assessments.

In this way, the citizens have the opportunity to know not only their own personal opinions and the opinions of their family, friends and associates, but also their scientific measure, the collective opinions of their countrymen, which is the best indicator of the country's mood day-to-day.

Collective opinions are rarely unanimous. Impending on the subject matter, fairly often there is a majority, but sometimes there is only substantial plurality. It is the function of a democratic system to appreciate where the balance of opinion lies, and to the directions.

In survey question design, the answer choices are part of what question. When 1992 asks about satisfaction with the performance of a government official, it offers six choices, shown on a card so that the respondent may read them as well as hear the descriptive words used as satisfaction terms: (a) very satisfied, (b) somewhat satisfied, (c) undecided if satisfied or not, (d) somewhat dissatisfied, (e) very dissatisfied, and (f) never heard of.

Note that the balance of opinion can be favorable even when the favorable side is less than a majority. This is the case, for instance, for House Speaker Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte whose net rating of +17 ("moderate") on recently recorded, is also in a plurality of 48 percent satisfied and 22 percent dissatisfied with his performance, and for the Cabinet in general, which got a net rating of +24 ("moderate") from a plurality of 45 percent satisfied and 21 percent dissatisfied with their performance—the highest it has scored in the past 12 years.

It is standard practice to compare a current president with past presidents at the same stage in their term. It is not standard to compare a president with a vice president.

The opinion polls on only over years' vice presidencies when I think last "normal" performance, namely Gary Aquino (+46 in April 1987) and Erap Estrada (+46 in April 1991). Erap Estrada got into trouble early and was ousted very soon. Cito Noli Binay (+26 in March 2004) and now Jejomar Binay (+31 in March 2010) and was my activity rated from late 2004 to 2010.

I have no predictions about P-Noy's rating next time. Some time from the March 30 revelation of the drug routes in China to the November or December Commission on Elections (Comelec) midterm election. But the basic economic situation is not favorable. The net rating of President Benigno Aquino dropped from +60 in December 2010 to +34 in the March survey of March 18 to April 11, 2011.

The Aquino public image is easier for politicians to know what's popular, but their duty is to do what they think is right. Are politicians or the people better judges of the right thing to do? Remember, the proposal to impeach GMA after the "Hello Garci" scandal was rejected by the House of Representatives, even though it was what most people wanted them to do.

(Comelec SMS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@ateneo.edu.ph)

# Travel

A RESPECTED mentor once told me if I have to choose between traveling and acquiring new things, I should choose traveling. "There's a lot of things one can learn from traveling, she said, and it is just a waste to buy gadgets or clothes or, [with] like, books."

Being a voracious, (voluntarily) hungered with her data, I used to be the kind of person who would rate the Certified Book-

worm Award. (Yes, there was such an award, given to the employee who read the most number of required readings). I argued that one time travel is unwise and that reading was a prominent way of serving oneself with enough ammunition to have the mental capacity. I was declining and I see more fight it while all-out might.

My life's a constant cycle of more for advice, and like a doctor, I would urge me for book inventory: (in hard file, complete with price tables and drop down lists) and rather which one to recommend, as if reading a book would actually solve their problem.

I don't get me wrong, I also like to travel. I even went on an unplanned, self-imposing trips with my friends, but I must admit that I have been to more places during the last two months than in the past two years. And from what I have seen, I realized if writers could inspire such awe in me if I were reading about certain things as opposed to experiencing them myself. What's so world is without me as invited as the books of the world and properly convey the brilliance of its Creator?

I do know would a writer describe in a book the experience of swimming with the whale sharks in Oslob? What would the writer's emotions in one reader's head the exact feeling of being taste enough to touch the whale sharks but choosing not to because you want to respect their space and trust and preserve might drive them away?

Or seeing a whale shark's eye move toward you as you swim beside him? Are a total monster is scene as if you are ego to say it. You are overawed that their eyes are actually, more like your stomach. You have to lift your head out of the water and cough. When you trip your head again, he is farther ahead, and you cannot catch up with him anymore.

Or the thrill of your first jump into the open sea without a life vest on? You are debating whether to get back on the boat or not after the whole thing. The first bet is how you that you want to kick them off but realize that if you just relaxed, you could swim faster.

Or swimming above the whale shark and steering down as you dive to see how deep? All the time you are thinking how massive he seems. How quietly he cuts through the water, how big his mouth is and that you could swim in his side is? You are enticed by the prospect of painting your job and devouring your life to keeping them safe, but for years of testaments, you have to drag yourself back to work come Monday.

Or the sound of the boat's engine clicking through the silence of the night in Donsol town, with the moon and the fireflies as your only illumination? You want to cup a firefly in your hand but are afraid it might kill it.

Or the fact that Donsol town doesn't have the distractions of electricity and technology . . . and so you have to rely on the stars, the wind, the moon, the water on your face, the dominants, the rocks to be entertained? With the night sky as your roof, you spend precious moments with your friends, and most of that is interrupted you are afraid again you lose sleep, as if you have known each other for years.

Or cracking up the mountain and grasping at anything within reach to keep yourself from slipping? You are crying very hard not to distract the more aware! Awoke because the ego would distract you from your goal.

Or feeling the wind on your face when you finally reached the summit, as if you can have wings! Or climbing boulders to reach the Barkies, knowing full well that each one wrong step you will end up swimming with the monkeys! Or [not] the view from the top that you finally give your full confidence to the leader. He knows where he is going and if you only follow him, he would lead you on a place where the view is more than enough to compensate for your aching muscles and your ripped pants, which after a few more times have you are willing to show, maybe on a special occasion.

Yes, you fall down, you have scrapes on your knees and one all over your legs but you stand up determined to do better on your next climb because now that's what life is all about, you stumble and fall but you still get up and time that your friends will be there at the top to cheer for you.

The point is we are taxing against time. Things change. People grow up. Circumstances might force you to move abroad or have different priorities. My grandfather, my elders and "lessers" friend ever, is battling cancer and he made me realize that life is so valuable, that I cannot afford to spend every weekend within my comfort zone. A day might come when the winds that he loved leaves Donsol or the view would have diminishing, making it impossible to see the stars at night, and the only view we would see up Mt. Mayon are the neck of rumble all over the rocks. Maybe then, books and imagination will capture the next experience.

Sometimes when we are heading taken a back seat in the process of getting there. And what we come back, we are never the same person. The same can be said about reading a book. I think that's why I am so addicted to superlatives as they leave me exactly become a part of us. But reading is such a solitary activity, while with traveling—isn't it more fun to come back after a trip with your friends of monumental messages from your new-found travel buddies?

*Jill Mole, 27, is an Oracle DBA professional during working hours and a sailor/swimmer, yoga practitioner, mountain climber and a vegetarian food expert for those of her making hours. She plans to go for scuba diving certification and is currently attending gale dancing classes. And yes, she will write!*

## YOUNG BLOOD

*Jill Mole*

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below.—Ed.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

*Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course or your work. Articles must be typed, if computed, because you're holding and the computer you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.*

# Books that hurt—and heal

COMMENTARY

*Nestor Tan Abutuan Cruz*

IF FLAMBOYANT go away, this season would have been the tournament period for the National Children's Book Festival, a collaboration by the Philippine Board on Books for Young People which began last year, for books published in 2009 and 2010. Out of 150 books reviewed by the judges, only 60 were selected as fine examples and models of Philippine children's book-publishing. These titles represent four publishers: "Bona ni Palengke" (Adarna House) written by May Tobias-Tapia and illustrated by Isabel Roxas; "Bawang Bibendo" (Lampara Books) written by Rosario Madrigal and illustrated by Virgie Baraquio III; "Can We Live on Mars?" (Adarna House) written by Gilbert Bonifacio Jimenez and illustrated by Ben; "Lab, Dab, Lab, Dab" (Anvilcraft) written by Bernell Medina and illustrated by Jomike Tejido; "Papa Tagalog" (Adarna House) written and illustrated by Jomike Tejido; and "Sali Sibi" (Adarna) written by Becky Bravo and illustrated by Jomi Mesa.

The titles selected were distributed as consolation say on the state of Philippine children's literature. Only fourteen are picture books, while the rest are nonfiction on science, biography and e-learning genre. Of the limited crop, two names belong to two books. Sisid: that as Russell Molina and Jomike Tejido being exceptionally talented, award-winning illustrators.

The 2nd NCBA would have reviewed all books published in 2011. Unfortunately, the current body of published titles with only about 14 titles does not appear to measure a yearly competition for now. It was therefore decided that the NCBA be held on alternate years until the publishing industry blossoms. Details for the nomination period for the 2012 NCBA will be announced on the National Children's Book Day ceremonies on the next Tuesday of July.

The hope is that this revision will coincide with the 150th anniversary of Dr. Jose Rizal's birth

The Circle Stories story touches on all that a wife endures with an alcoholic husband. Told from a child's perspective, it also touches only hints at what is going on when the child Mico misses and does not like—how circle blocks time for hand in-their-40/Shoots, the way he sits at the end of their dinner table, his hand on his mother's right shoulder, his mother's voice carefully trained not to betray her feelings as she tries to keep things calm all his anxieties. It was only his father who can repair his bike and he knows that his parents had spoken about Uncle Martin. The story ends reassuringly: "Mico took a big bite of his pandesal. It was delicious."

It is unfortunate that the Big Books are not available commercially, but as originally intended, for donations to outlaw communities and librarian who request copies. For such purposes, e-mail Ed Maranan, executive director of Readathon Inc. (Tsadd) at pajbookfund@gmail.com.

These two books join the ranks of the few titles which focus on issues which would be best appreciated when further discussion with adults. In recent months, there are how Villamonte's Big Bimbo Now Going Online and Angelo Rivera's "Ang Libro ni Lea" (Adarna) which deal with child sex abuse; and Jose Lee Deleseño's "Pepito Henne, Manuel's Brave" on marital separation.

These books which qualify as bibliotherapy are only what excellent children's literature is all about—books which raise questions, lead the readers to probe and reflect, rather than just provide all the just answers. What true learning is all about.

*Nestor Tan Abutuan Cruz (nestorcruz@gmail.com) is a member of the Philippine Board on Books for Young People, the Foundation for Worldwide Books Projects Assn., and a trustee of the Dr. Alfredo Evidente Foundation.*

# VP on the spot

BUSINESS MATTERS

*Edilberto C. de Jesus*

HEY, PRESIDENT Jejomar Binay has undertaken some high-level assignments from President Aquino, notably the bringing home to work democracy the Filipino overseas of drug offenses. Such assignments help dispel the notion that the Vice President serves only as a fifth wheel. They stymie Jojo Binay's public profile, help build political capital and, of course, help him prepare for the day he is appointed and elected to the highest office in the land.

Last week, the media reported that P-Noy had tapped Binay for yet another high-profile task: to settle a dispute between Cambodia, tapped by 203 members of the House of Representatives, asking that Binay be appointed a "hero's burial" in the Libingan ng mga Bayani. Presidential Spokesperson Edwin Lacierda announced that Friday had directed the Vice President to convene a committee that would evaluate the request and forward it to Aquino.

Unlike previous assignments, this one carries more political risk for the Vice President. The terms of the resolution would not allow Binay to make the pronouncement on his own because he did not fulfill—as the citizens of Rome "no hero I swear, not to praise him." In Shakespeare's play, Antony roams the Romans against Brutus, whom they had earlier acclaimed for killing the dictator Julius Caesar. Binay would not want Senate's the parties to face Marcos in the Libingan is to praise him.

This was the terms of the resolution, which justified a Libingan burial for Marcos "felt as a patriot." But the historical record showed that such "patriot" had about his military exploits as a guerrilla leader, plundered the national treasury and inflicted torture and death on Filipinos. His rehabilitation through a hero's burial would, by inference, condemn those who had opposed his regime. Binay would not want Cory Aquino as the Filipino female Brutus?

The diplomatic would probably not go this far. They also comment a hero's burial for Marcos as "a congratulations act of reconciliation." But the appeal places the burden of reconciliation on the aggrieved. We have enough examples to show that reconciliation is not achieved by the perpetrator's bravery and of victim's demand for justice, especially in a case where the guilty party has offered no hesitation, no apology, and not even an admission of guilt.

In pressing for a Libingan burial, first, Binay, being of strong democratic ideals, may not anticipate political purposes. A Libingan resting place would rehabilitate the reputation of the Marcos family and may provide some cover against any pending or prospective court cases. Reparations to the victims of human rights violations remained against supporting any legal action against the Marcoses. By inclusion allegedly aspiring to a presidential bid, there are not to significant benefits.

To hold an EDSA I boat, a potential incriminating records, to simply signing a resolution, may not help explain the number of signatories. In addition, the Marcos Remainders class still exist, which significant financial and electoral resources, access to which politicians would (or rightly) wish to tap for their campaigns. Binay, for one, who must be assured among the potential presidential candidates in 2016. Politics is addictive, alienating nearly 200 congressmen would violate this rule.

Binay may not especially consult with political parties and non-government organizations of the Libingan issue. Unfortunately, while useful and perhaps necessary, this approach is unlikely to result in a clear and clean consensus. The MIO recognizes grew and gained strength in opposing martial law, most probably, grass-roots NGOs would probably oppose a Libingan burial that would recognize Marcos as a hero. Unwinding politicians would instantly confirm their disagreement on the issue.

Considering the impressive number of signatories, however, the strength of their support for the resolution will remain to be determined. SWS surveys show the country evenly divided on the issue. So the congressmen really were to take the resolution to the floor, the issue would become an emotional divisive issue to contact the country's from the terrorist and international challenges, a factor, and, in the process, associating themselves with the architect of martial law and against those who brought him down through the 1986 Edsa Revolution.

Any Binay belongs to the Edsa generation, and cherish his role in politics. On the issues of Marcos' resolutions for a Libingan burial, as P-Noy has noted, "he has a strong opinion." If brother Binay may submit a recommendation to P-Noy it is not clear from the March 25 report of the Philippine Daily Inquirer's statements suggests the first line the P-Noy quote indicated the second: "[Binay] will give it a fair hearing and he will still see the result of the study."

Unless Vice President Binay can pass the buck upstairs...which would also be a reflection on leadership—the decision on the congressional resolution to give Marcos a hero's burial in the Libingan ng mga Bayani can easily test for him. Will Jojo Binay take the pragmatic approach of accompanying powerful political allies in Congress? Or will he go by the principles that he follows puts the Marcos lawyers in opposing the Marcos martial law regime?

*Edilberto C. de Jesus is president of the Ateneo Institute of Management.*

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# Also ban mining in Palawan

LETTERS

BAGUIO (PIOT) the happiest states of my childhood (referring to the pristine beaches and crystal-clear rivers of Palawan, it really hasn't seen what politics and greed have done to this unspoiled province. In earlier times, politicians only had interest in each other during elections. Today sadly, motives are fueled to kill politics for fun to cause them to disappear, leaving chilling trails of blood to scare the rest angels. The tragedy here is that while politicians quarrel over votes, the real basis of corruption are escaped by big time players who have on the island's rich resources.

The rape of Palawan—the devastating exploitation of its natural and oil fields, its marine wealth and virgin forests—should stop now. As the orders go higher, so do the level of violence and corruption. More politicians will suffer unrelated repercussions, and more environmentalist and media people will go the way of the late Gerry Ortega.

President Aquino's Executive Order 23 should not be limited to preserving natural and wetland forests. In the case of Palawan, the whole of Palawan, including its outlying island municipalities, should be spared from logging and mining. These island municipalities, which today, host high-end resorts and are home to rare flora and fauna, could disappear if logging and mining are not banned in Palawan. Existing concessionaires must no longer be given permits to expand operations and their activities should be rationally monitored.

But leaders were too generous with our national patrimony. Republic Act 7942, by itself, is notorious in its profligacy—allowing big companies to mine up to 81,000 hectares each for 25-50 years!), with further 800-hectare forest policies and court rulings. It may be recalled that the past administration's economic planners' choice danced to the tunes in the campaign to lure mining investors. This resulted in the sudden rise in the number of mining applications. To date, there are 429 pending mining applications with the Mines and Geo-sciences Bureau (MGB) (MGB 2010).

Covering about 7,42,434.36 [hectares] or roughly 54 percent of Palawan's total land area.

It is time for President Aquino to reconsider the flawed implementation of our natural resources. The deadly effects of climate change were seen as in the case, running to into international attention: events from calamities so it would be Filipino's [family legacy] to who assess if he deserves certain areas in the country as safe havens for our burgeoning population and coming generations. Our rich cities to Filipinos.

I, therefore, join and strongly endorse the move to totally ban logging and mining in Palawan.

—EVA MAGCOCINCHING,
retired chair,
BSUPC Foundation Inc.
Sustainable Development,
PIDA, Ideal

## Santiago's 'tommyrot' talk vs House body

"Well shit, we are impressed!" Sec. Mercedes Deshecha-Jimenez eyed the lack of finesse displayed by members of the House Committee on Justice hearing the impeachment charges against Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez. She sailed against the unprovoked haste with which they gave their stance in the charges. Heaping lavish on her being a former trial judge, Senator Santiago chided the congressmen for not knowing even rules on evidence. She opined that nothing in the indictment against Gutierrez rises to the level of an impeachable offense. Though Gutierrez might have made wrong decisions or dereliction of duty, the exercise of discretion (or disobedience) did not amount to a betrayal of the public trust, much less culpable violation of the Constitution, (Dr. symbol, 3/3/11) In a nutshell, Santiago was saying most of the evidence so far adduced would subside in court.

With all due respect, Santiago was asking members of an impeachment proceedings to act more a judicial process of weighing the evidence. She, of all people, should know that. Exasperated by any sense of sophistries, congressmen treat such proceedings as nothing more than a "numbers game"—a veritable exercise in political futility. No matter how weak or strong the evidence might be, the decision to exercise the charges to the Senate is a political one. The only way to prevent this is always expected to be along party lines or based on political inflow-tents and affiliations.

In the last analysis, the evidence is practically irrelevant. Mr. court can remember the ruling of such committees. Look what happened to the impeachable impeachment complaints filed against former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, having pushed forward with her impeachment trial, the senators literally stoned the wagon to protect her. Ohh bummer! Although the proceedings like a true soap opera was a novel in the park. The charges were quickly dismissed without one iota of the complainants having any chance to present their evidence. That was a... rare decision!

—STEPHEN G. MISNAYO,
dimsumsteve@yahoo.com.ph


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BDO


## GSIS should put up funds for all legislated benefits

HOW I congratulate and thank Robert Stephen for accepting the challenge to lead the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS).

We have come to believe we have reached the point of no return and the pension fiasco will not be solved. He will look into the plight of the aging pensioners of the GSIS, particularly administer the benefits as legislated from them.

I am a 70-year-old retired public school teacher and I have been under this fiasco with administrator for lower echelons and high school persons for 20 years now. At present, I am also going [illegible] for my wife.

When April 1997 to October 2003, before the implementation of Bayanan 2 and the corresponding medical allowance, as mandated by Presidential Decree 650. Unfortunately, in November 2003, purportedly due to lack of funds, the GSIS stopped sending me my medical allowance. I was [illegible], to write letters where I [illegible] also refused me this medical assistance. I firmly believe that since there is a law providing for such allowance, that funds should be appropriated and made available. I have communicated with the GSIS many times on this matter but nobody has answered my letters.

We contract out in the "barrio point" of our lives, and we need a lot of help to sustain our ailing bodies. I am personally appealing to the "Mayor's to GSIS president for his kind attention to date and to get the benefits that we are to be [illegible]. "Ambot po ang dami lang pasa sa ang kahoy! What good is the holder if the horse a dead?"

The request of Hella S.J. Villa of 468 B Zamora St., Caloocan City [illegible] me to write the letter. The last urgently [illegible] a reply from Mr. Stephen and the GSIS.

—MARIA CRISOLOGO,
237 Bilibid Viejo St., Poblacion,
Hagonoy, Bulacan

## Restore survivorship pension—GSIS urged

THE UNDERSIGNED pension of my 83-year-old mother, Feliciana Zaragoza Sabanpan, suspended recently after five years upon which the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) was still headed by Justice Winnie Cayetano. Since the death of my father Benjamin Calderon Sabanpan in 1999 and until then, my mother was receiving a monthly pension of over P3,000. My father was a former employee of the MWSS. The P3,000 pension could hardly cannot the needs of my mother, but it was a big help, especially in buying maintenance medicines for her various illnesses associated with old age.

My mother and I have been to the GSIS office several times to verify if survivorship pensions have been restored, but we always would go home disappointed.

My mother, now 83 years old, is a widow. Former President Aquino assumed the reins of government. Then we appeal for him to direct the GSIS to restore the survivorship pensions, [illegible] assistance will be of great help to pensioners, like my mother, most of whom are now in the twilight years of their lives.

—SUSAN SABANPAN-RODRIGUEZ,
[illegible] St., Laguna, Ideal

## Merci's impeachment would be grand cover-up

HERCELINDA GUTIERREZ, who claims to be the ombudsman, will be surprised.

Justices members have dissatisfied themselves by publicly announcing her impeachment and eventually her subsequent removal. The only necessity of an impartial judge"—there is pretty low the defense of ombudsperson's with due process of law. That is if we follow the logic of the prosecutors which assumes that conviction is a foregone conclusion.

The law is the newly informed her removal of abuse four years from Ramon Bautista's constitutional [illegible] term which expired by operation of law in December 2009. Her [illegible] of the Office of the Ombudsman's official are very done without jurisdiction and, therefore, void from the beginning.

Hence, the current impeachment process appears to be a grand cover-up of her illegal acts by those who, directly or indirectly, benefit from her actions.

Who are those powerful or influential [illegible] Filipino people must know.

—JUAN F. MEJIA,
[illegible]@yahoo.com

# Court reverses Ombudsman suspension of 'euro general'

By Jerome Aning

THE COURT of Appeals (CA) has allowed a ranking police officer allegedly involved in the "euro generals" scandal of 2008 to resume as Ombudsman-mandated suspension.

In a 14-page decision, the CA's Fourth Division reversed Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez's suspension of Chief Supt. Tomas Rentoy Upon allegedly unlawful disbursing P2,215,4,096 in Philippine National Police (PNP) funds for a trip to Russia taken by several PNP officers and their wives.

In the decision penned by Associate Justice Jose-Dante Santiago, the CA said the Ombudsman committed a "grave error" in not taking stronger grounds to deny the motion to reconsider suspension order against Rentoy.

**Generalized allegations**

"[The public respondent Ombudsman], in its comment, only made general, and allegations of the discretionary power of the Ombudsman to issue the preventive suspension and the supposed strong evidence of guilt against Rentoy, without specifically pointing out or enumerating the acts on which the preventive suspension was based," the decision read.

Rentoy, executive director at the PNP directorate for comptrollership, was one of the officers accused of involvement in the "euro generals" scandal where three police comptroller Director Eliseo de la Paz and his wife were caught carrying 100,000 euros or P6.8 million, in their bags at the Moscow airport as they were leaving the country.

The police officers and their wives were in Russia to attend an International Criminal Police Organization Interpol conference.

On Sept. 8, 2010, Rentoy, along with special disbursing officer Samuel Rodriguez, Chief Supt. Orlando Perlada, Supt. Elmer Pelbelida, directorate for human resources and doctrine development chief Director Svetlana Dota, and directorate for operations chief Director Hilarion Manlie Jr. were placed under six-month preventive suspension without pay.

Rentoy filed a motion for reconsideration of the suspension order for lack of actual and legal basis. He elevated his case to the CA when Gutierrez denied his motion.

On Dec. 8, 2010, the appellate court issued a temporary restraining order, stopping the PNP from implementing the Ombudsman's order.

The Ombudsman had charged the six officers with grave misconduct, dishonesty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service.

# Sandigan chief won't inhibit

By Leila B. Salaverria

SANDIGANBAYAN Presiding Justice Edilberto Sandoval yesterday opposed moves to have him disqualified from the plunder case of former military comptroller Carlos Garcia, saying that his son, who is a government lawyer, had never opposed before his division or filed any motion before it.

Sandoval said his son Ben Reynaldo Sandoval joined the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) only in November 2010, long after Garcia's case had been brought before the Second Division which he chaired.

The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) had earlier moved to have Sandoval inhibit himself in the Garcia case on the ground that his relationship with a member of the OSP, which is prosecuting Garcia, might create the impression of bias.

The OSG has sought to intervene in Garcia's P303 million plunder case because it disagreed with the plea bargain that the OSP entered into with Garcia. Under the controversial plea bargain, Garcia would be allowed to plead guilty to lesser offenses in exchange for turning over his assets to the government.

Yesterday, Assistant Solicitor General Susan Ranada told the court that the OSG was not casting aspersion on Sandoval's character, but was only pointing out that his having a son in the OSP was a reason for him to opt out of the case.

But Sandoval said the OSG should also state that the younger Sandoval only joined the OSP in November last year. He said that otherwise, the OSG might be saying a "half-truth," which could be damaging to him.

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Assistant Editor Tony Bengcoke

# Across the NATION

SUSPECT Bella Baby Santos in a press conference in drug enforcement in the abduction and killing of 6-year-old Eljah Joy Pique. JOAN BONDOC/PDI

## New suspects in abduction, slay of Cebu girl charged

By Jhoeven Napalcasa
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—Police have filed charges against a new set of suspects in the abduction and murder of 6-year-old Eljah Joy Pique, following the burial of her mutilated and decapitated body in the dropping of charges against two earlier suspects, a Norwegian and his Filipino girlfriend.

The women charged this time, Sofia Ruby Santos, pro-bonded suspected and said she would "fight until the end." Her British boyfriend, Ian Griffiths, was charged with her.

Santos, of Naga City, Cebu, and Griffiths were charged with abducting and killing Eljah Joy on Feb. 8. The girl's body was found in a creek in Minglanilla, Cebu.

Senior Supt. Louie Oppus, deputy regional police chief, said charges of pornography and trafficking are also to be filed against the suspects.

Santos and her lawyer called a press conference on Thursday to denounce police.

"I will leave everything to God and my lawyers," said a hysterical Santos.

Police unleashed witnesses' account, including those of Eljah Joy's classmates, as basis for the charges. Also presented as evidence were pornographic materials and the Pajero that was used in the abduction.

Santos said Griffiths flew to Dumaguete on Feb. 9, a few hours after the body of Eljah Joy was found.

"Although this act of flight alone does not necessarily indicate guilt, it was very suspicious," said the police in the charges.

# Politicians, their private armies tagged top ARMM rights abusers

COTABATO CITY—A top human rights official said abuses by powerful political clans in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) are keeping the region's human rights record dismal.

A military official, however, said the government's war on private armies, which help political clans in the ARMM vote through the barrel of the gun, is continuing without letup.

Loretta Ann Rosales, chair of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), said the CHR is making its presence felt in the ARMM because of threats of undocumented cases of human rights violations in the region.

Rep. Esmael Bernardo, deputy commander of the Army's Sixth Infantry Division, said while political warlords still exist in the ARMM, the military was not slowing down in its campaign to disarm them of at least two of their sources of power—guns and goons.

"Our operations against loose firearms until the dismantling of private armies continues," said Bernardo.

Among the powerful clans that are targets now of the military campaign is the Ampatuan family, whose key members are now on trial for the Nov. 23, 2009, Maguindanao massacre.

Chief Supt. Bernardo Leing, ARMM police director, said while the threat from supposedly guerrillas and terror groups has become manageable, police were having more difficulty dealing with powerful politicians who move around with a retinue of heavily armed men.

Laing, however, said "The last thing we wanted" starting with police operations to seize caches of firearms belonging to and arrest gunmen working for the Ampatuan clan.

CHR Chair Rosales said the commission is establishing an office in the ARMM to document complaints of human rights abuses by political warlords.

Rasyak Guimindan, executive secretary of the ARMM, said the "possessed high security] ask in the region has been the major stumbling block to development."

Politicians in the ARMM, he said, are notorious for human rights abuses. Charlie U. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao

A CHILD walks atop to his family's farm in Maguindanao on a visit being pulled by a cow comes across members of a private army. NOEL CELIS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

## *Biking priest decides to walk, run for peace talks*

NEGOTIATOR Fr Jose Fr. Ausalo Picartal on stage, where he is conducting talks with the rebels. CHARLIE U. SEÑASE/INQUIRER MINDANAO

ILIGAN CITY—Fr. Picartal across the nation twice in a bid to call attention to a number of issues, including the peace process and the environment.

On his most journey, however, Fr. Ausalo Picartal has decided to just jogged walk.

Decided against his long walk from this city to Apari, Cagayan, to draw attention to the need for peace talks with communist rebels guerrillas.

Starting to set out to Fr. could who had become known as the "biking priest," however.

In 2010, he walked and ran for 800 kilometers, from Ferrara to Ipsita, It was a pilgrimage, he said.

How, his goal—to run on foot will be longer—covering about 2,000 km for 57 days from this city to Aparri, Cagayan.

He said he will make several stopovers to campaign for support for peace talks with communist and separatist guerrillas.

"I can promise that a peace agreement would finally be reached," he said.

The priest said he also wanted to hand-carry a letter to President Aquino that contains his views on another issue close to his heart—the reproductive health bill that is now being called responsible parenthood bill.

Picartal said he doesn't expect to meet Mr. Aquino. "I will just leave the letter at the Palace and then go on my way," the priest said.

He hopes to get some donation routine courtesy from Mr. Aquino. "Under P-Pnoy, I expect more because I know that he will truly listen," he said. Bernadette Joy Sarmiento, Inquirer Mindanao

## In Zambo, 3 boys found 'salvaged'

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The customary succession of three minors sent shock waves overwhelming in this city that has been used to terror threats and terror-related crimes.

The bodies of Jerry Escobio, 12, of Barangay Tumaga, Cedie Cabillas, 13, and Elvin Dahlo Jr., 14, were found in a room in Bito Outpost in Barangay Cabatangan here.

Police advocates and government officials are still probing from the shock brought by the bodies' discovery in a city that was supposed to be clear of rebels.

Senior Supt. Edwin de Ocampo, acting city police chief, said the minors have been involved in petty crimes.

The minors' bodies bore signs of torture—their hands and feet were tied, their faces covered with packing tape, their clothes were shuttled and their bodies bore multiple stab wounds.

Nabeil Basilio Ajenkaram, Cabahuay village chief, said it is not an unheard militia-men of the leaders in his town.

"It really bothers me to see young boys, or even adults, summarily executed, as witnesses (not good), very disturbing. We have been, we don't need to describe," Ajenkaram said.

Cherrian Monteverde Fr. Angel Cabo, whose advocacy includes saving street children, on Thursday described the executions as "highly-level criminality."

Cabo said "it is not customary sense with justice and provide means to cope for the children."

De Ocampo said police have no motive yet. Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

INQUIRER Visayas

Editor Juan Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Connie B. Fernandez

# Lessons from a well-managed co-op

By Joey A. Gabieta
Bacolod City, Negros

PUBLIC school teacher Teresita Bautista cannot remember how many times she has borrowed money just to make both ends meet.

Before, she would run to a loan shark and close her eyes on the exorbitant interest rates just so solve her immediate need for money.

But now, she and the rest of the 460 teachers of the Leon National High School (LNHS) no longer have to fall prey to those unscrupulous loan sharks.

They can turn to the LNHS Multi-Purpose Cooperative to help them take over single financial difficulties or a forest-hooded rate.

The LNHS MPC was put up in 1983 by 40 LNHS teachers as a misbeeding cooperative to address their basic economics especially during hard times.

## Mini grocery

They contributed P200 each as start-up capital for a mini grocery inside the school. Cooperative members would buy grocery items on credit.

In December 1992, the cooperative decided to go into money lending upon the prodding of then school principal Berta Verzosa in order "to help the teachers on their financial needs," said Bernaco Alabado, LNHS MPC chair.

"That way, the idea is, we would no longer run to shylocking institution which offers unreasonable interest rates," said Mabolo, 55, one of the original members of the cooperative. He assumed position as chair in February 2008.

At that time, the cooperative had only P363,000 although it was registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority.

The cooperative took Tarangan's advice. It ventured into to be a total business move.

After 28 years, the LNHS MPC has grown into one of the most established cooperatives in Eastern Visayas with assets of more than P20 million.

It now has 342 members, 50 of them outstanding permanent of the LNHS.

THE LETTE National High School has teachers who have successfully formed a cooperative. JOEY GABIETA

It also has a credit line of P1.8 million from the government-owned Land Bank of the Philippines.

But more than anything else, the cooperative has saved the LNHS teachers from loan sharks who took advantage of their financial difficulties.

"Whenever I am in need of money, all I have to do now is visit our cooperative office and apply for a loan," said Bautista, an English teacher.

## Big help

She and husband Ardolph, 57, who works at LNHS supply office, can barely sustain the needs of their four children, one of them a student of medicine.

Mabolo said he too was a favorite "client" of the cooperative because he had secured several loans just to answer the daily grind.

"The cooperative is really a big help, a blessing to us teachers. It helps somehow to ease our financial burden," said Mabolo, who has been a teacher at the LNHS for 28 years. He is handling the Teaching and Livelihood Education (TLE) subject.

School principal Abigail Bagaforo, TIC, said the cooperative has been a big help to the LNHS teachers.

"Unspoil I has loaned hard from it. I have received loans at the cooperative ourselves of times," Bagaforo said.

"Whenever I need money, I don't have to worry where I will go. All I have to do is apply for a loan at the cooperative and, my financial problem is solved," he added.

The LNHS MPC offers an interest rate of two percent per month—lower than the 20-per cent interest rate collected by loan sharks to teachers.

The loan is also payable up to 36 months, depending on the loaned amount.

To become a member, an LNHS teacher will have to put up P2,500 in deposit as start-up investment to the cooperative.

Members can avail of educational and hospitalization loans. The cooperative also offers a calamity loan of P15,000 to the families affected by the recent flood in Tacloban City and other areas in the province.

It also offers a kabuhayan (livelihood) loan by as much as P100,000.

The cooperative has a "redeem-a-payroll policy" that allows the LNHS-MPC to redeem the items pawned by a member. The cooperative charges a two percent interest on the amount paid to recover the item.

Mabolo said that just like any organization, their cooperative encountered a rough start.

"For one, some of our teachers did not believe that we can survive. Some chose other cooperatives," he said.

Although they were lean, he added they opted to move forward. With determination and courage of the members, they were able to succeed.

"Of course, we have to give credit to our members for patronizing the cooperative and for being a good member," Mabolo said.

He admitted that it never caused their minds that the cooperative, which ran a small grocery inside the school, would get big.

"It really boosted our morale and changed the lifestyle of some of our members as they would no longer resort to loan sharks because the outside offering high interest rates or evil moon to their members ..." said Mabolo.

As of now, the cooperative only services the members of the LNHS-MPC. But it plans to expand its membership to members in other schools in Talisbian and even some parts of Leon and Jaman.

Many teachers in other public schools cannot wait for the LNHS-MPC to expand.

One of them was Leonard Tagbawan, a science teacher at the San Jose National High School Tacloban, who, this early, said that being a member of the cooperative could indeed help him financially.

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INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education Division is now the recipient of Philippine Peso of: 10,000,000 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is appropriate under the contracts for the works described below for the various schools in the Division of Tarangan as follows:

CY 2011 BASIC EDUCATION FACILITY FUND

| LOCATION | NAME OF SCHOOL | DESCRIPTION (IT) | QTY | ABC | Contract Completion Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Cabacan NS | Complete Three | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | Mabini ES | Complete Three | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 2,000,000.00 | 45 days |
| 2 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 3 | Bagumbayan ES | Bagumbayan | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | 120 days |
| 4 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | 120 days |
| 5 | Cabacan NS | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | Cabacan ES | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 2,000,000.00 | 45 days |
| 6 | Bagumbayan ES | Bagumbayan Annex | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 7 | Cabacan NS | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | Bagumbayan ES | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 2,000,000.00 | 45 days |
| 8 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 9 | Cabacan NS | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 10 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 11 | Cabacan NS | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 12 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 13 | Cabacan NS | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 14 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 15 | Cabacan NS | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 16 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 17 | Cabacan NS | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 18 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 19 | Cabacan NS | Complete | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |
| 20 | Bagumbayan ES | Phase 1 | 1 | 1,000,000.00 | |
| | TOTAL | | | 1,000,000.00 | |

The Department of Education, Division of Tarangan, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), now invites bids for the above contracts. Bids received in excess of the above ABC shall be rejected. Bidding shall be conducted following the Open Competitive Bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 9184. Bidding is open to all qualified contractors as defined in the IRR of RA 9184.

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, cooperatives, and associations with capacity and experience to undertake the contract as certified by the contractor's duly authorized representative and which meet the requirements of the IRR of RA 9184.

Prospective bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested contractors upon the payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of P1,000.00.

It may be downloaded free of charge from the website of the PhilGEPS.

| Activity | Date and Time | Venue |
|---|---|---|
| Issuance of Bidding Documents | March 7, 2011 - April 20, 2011 | Supply Section, Division of Tarangan City |
| Pre-Bid Conference | March 21, 2011, 10:00 AM | Supply Section, Division of Tarangan City |
| Submission and Opening of Bids | March 28, 2011, 1:00 PM | Supply Section, Division of Tarangan City |

The Bidding Documents may be requested at purchased at the address previously indicated herein upon submission of a letter of intention signed and addressed to the BAC and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00). It may be downloaded free of charge from the website of the PhilGEPS.

The BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, or declare failure of bidding at any time prior to contract award without incurring any liability to the affected bidders.

(Sgd.) MR. MARIANO D. ORTIZ
BAC Chairperson

DO. - April 1, 2011

# Old Panay epic: Poem becomes dance-drama

By Hazel T. Nita
Iloilo City

WHAT happens when an age-old Panay Bukidnon epic and its then 17-year-old storyteller meets an aggressive university theater group?

The answer is "Tarangban (Cave)," a visually fascinating rendition of a Sinugbuanon or oral epic in dance drama form that has impressed Manila critics, with the audience asking for a repeat performance.

"A dance good show," wrote the late critic Walter Ang ("Theater of the young, here and now," March 8, 2010), who praised the "fantastic images on stage" and the "unique musical scenery, the rousing music and sound design that were exhilarating."

This was during the University of San Agustin Little Theater's (USALT) performance of Tarangban or "Yang, Ind 6: The National University and Colleges Theater Festival and Conference" at College of St. Benilde-La Salle in Manila on Feb. 2, and at the Pantanja Festival at Tangbulang Training Bureau of the Cultural Center of the Philippines on Feb. 7, 2010.

They had a repeat performance on March 1 at the newly refurbished USALT auditorium. Those who watched agreed with the Manila theater critics.

## A love story

"The performance was superb. I wonder how the performers memorized the story like it was their own. It looked difficult to do. I am amazed," said Edward Ello, a native of Sta. Ana, Manila, who works for Handicap International that has a project on Panay Island.

Tarangban is a love and adventure epic that tells the story of Datu Sumuroddon's (Pillar of the World, master carpenter) heroic journey in search of the forest maiden (well-kept manderas) and his lover Nagmalitong Yawa, a babaylan (shaman).

In his long voyage, he is accompanied by his brother Dumalapdap and his spirit friend Bagbag, who also guides them throughout the journey.

They encounter upon the enchanted cave of Tarangban where they encountered mythical beasts and creatures which they all defeated.

The babaylan Nagmalitong Yawa, disguised as a man, is the person of Datu Sumuroddon, slaughtered a thousand bindian (diwatas) and eventually, Dumalapdap's dark nemesis. In the end, Dumalapdap and Nagmalitong Yawa were reunited.

The need for the staging of the "Tarangban" started in 2004 when the USALT read a Filipino-translated poem written by Sir Jonathan Cruz, now dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of University of San Agustin.

"We were at first intrigued by the poem that we, the USA Little Theater (USALT) had to set it in performance poetry. Over the years, however, we came to find there has been an entire world residing in the narrative—a cultural heritage yet unexplored and lying hidden within the lines of the poem," said Edward and Eric Divinagracia, the directors of Tarangban.

## Authentic voice

The USALT had an entry to the Directing Festival in 2006 based on their research on Sinay Bukidnon culture, but the performers and directors felt "it lacked authenticity."

"It lacked a voice that carried it with such conviction. Not even our research that time brought us that conviction," said Eric Divinagracia, who graduated with a Master of Arts Administration degree from Western Michigan University as an international fellow of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program.

The passion and the authentic voice that Tarangban required came in the person of then 17-year-old Rosalyn "Tata" Glenser, a member of the USALT and friend of senior member Reinoller Rhys Cudiale.

Cudiale found that Glenser was a member of the Panay Bukidnon Lola Group, a women and choppers of the tribe, he resolved to render this production in the form that we envisioned," the Divinagracia brothers said.

Glenser, now 23 and working as a front desk officer in Longwood Garden Hotel in Pasay City, took a leave from work just so she can once more chant the epic that she has memorized since she was 4 years old—to the amazement of the audience in the March 1 performance in Iloilo City.

Tarangban brings the story of her people, Glenser was not only a character but also in collusion with theater colleagues, Peter Paul Dionora.

Her chanting of the epic saw the arrival from exile of the collaborators of top USALT alumni-organizers who performed the live music: Gerardo "Bimbo" Mayuela and Betty Castillon with USALT alumni Gadiana, Errol Jave Villalobos and Gino Bautillano; personnel artistic partners JP Libo-on and lecturer Salvador Arroyuno, Jr., the dance troupe Earthbeat and its alumnus, Bryan Sap.

## Ardina rules Thailand junior tilt by 7 shots

DITTE ARDINA moved out with a three-under-par 70 to post a comfortable victory over ICTSI teammate Andrea Ubarra in the Team Philippines Singha International Junior Golf Championship in Thailand Thursday. Ardina finished with a 213 total at the Royal Green Sukhumvit Golf Club in Nakornpathom province, while Ubarra had a 220 after a 76 and a 72. Competing as "Ditte" in her Filipino citizenship and amateur status, Ardina shot 1-2 finish to Filipino citizens one week after Chino Hizon topped Ardina and Lourdes Castrejon for the Thailand Ladies Open last week.

Editor Teddyboy B. Molavales
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Chiong

# SPORTS

# Rain or Shine drubs Alaska

## Aces miss suspended import

By Jun Nacorda

COACH YENG Guiao used his Rain or Shine Elasto Painters newer thought it would be this easy.

The Elasto Painters simply powered on the import-less Alaska Aces late night, running away with a 113-97 win to seal a three-game sweep in the 35th Commissioner's Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Former Aztecs had 22 points and three fast-guided a field day with 20 markers and 10 assists as the Elasto Painters-keeper shots played bold after at 4-3 while dashing the hopes of the Aces (3-3) to nail the other automatic berth of the semifinal spot.

Talk 'N' Text went on to claim the automatic ticket, collecting a stubborn 8-0lug Derby Ace, 107-103, in the other match.

Paul Harris finished with 17 points and 13 rebounds but the Tropang Texters needed to weather the fastenders, who fast import Courtney Stanley in the first quarter.

Stanley was ejected just 27 seconds after the opening tip for playing his foot on Harvey Carey's landing spot.

"I want say that Jun referred that we were not get into the series. But I was really disappointed with the effort," said TNT coach Chot Reyes, whose wards chalked up their seventh win and tied Smart Gilas (7-1) on top.

Asi Taulava made became the 32nd player to league history to grab 10,000 defensive rebounds last night, barely a week after scoring a total of 5,000 points in his career.

Alaska sorely missed LD Williams, who served his one-game suspension on top of a P50,000 fine after swinging his elbow and hitting Almeda's Elias Cardona in the face during the opening minutes of their game last week.

RAIN OR SHINE'S Ryan Arana penetrates the defense of Alaska center Jarrejon Rivero in last night's lopsided game.

# Alabang tops ICTSI jungolf interclub

ALABANG rode the solid game of Jana Reyes to claim the Division I crown while Aguinaldo and Silver captured the boys' division in the annual 2011 ICTSI-ADPF Interclub golf championships at the Splendido Taal Golf and Country Club in Laurel, Batangas.

Reyes, just together rounds of 52, 44 and 52 points in leading the assault for Alabang and capping the boys individual plum to the 54-hole seven-holing effort in the summer vacation of the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines.

Andrea Ubilima (51-49-49), Sebastian Lorenzo (49-49-52) and Gabriel Manotoc (50-50-47) teamed up with Reyes for Alabang's 445 points to win the Division I field.

Southwoods 1 finished 9-0 points off at 391, Ayala Alabang Sagittarius Apollo Orange 2 in a one-point win over Navy 2 to divide 2-2 while Navy rosters completed a 1-2 finish in Division 3.

Chan, playing in Class B, scored 48-44-52 for Aguinaldo, which also fielded Geraldine Arenas, Adrian Pontevert and Carl Crispin made 299 to close the Kenneth Nine and Navy 3 (307).

Ayala Alabang Sagittarius Apollo Orange and Silver Carding Kennet follow Navy players Ben Mabera, Marsha Sulsaluna, Francis Kyle Pangan and Sunshine Chong, 143-156.

Chan, Ubilima shares Most Improved (+17) Gross honors with Lorenzo (+10), Reyes (+9), Manotoc (+8), Ayala Alabang 1 (+6), Navy 2 (+5), Southwoods 1 (+4), Ayala Alabang 2 (+3), Navy 3 (+2), Southwoods 2 (+1), Ayala Alabang 3 (+0), Navy 1 (-1), Ayala Alabang Sagittarius Apollo Orange 1 (-2), Ayala Alabang Sagittarius Apollo Orange 2 (-3), Ayala Alabang Sagittarius Apollo Orange 3 (-4), Ayala Alabang Sagittarius Apollo Orange 4 (-5), Ayala Alabang Sagittarius Apollo Orange 5

# *Hyundai run draws big field* Chess team favorites whip foes

[illegible] 20,000 PUNTOS will take over Roxas Boulevard today as Hyundai Zone Run for a Cause holds 5K and 10K fun runs which will start and end at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila.

There will be three starting times for the 10K category (5 a.m., 5:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.) and five for 5K (6 a.m., 6:30 a.m., 8:20 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 5:40 p.m.).

Registration fees with each runner still entitled to a singlet and an electronic timing chip.

The 10K course will make a U-turn at Roxas Boulevard and Edsa to Pasay while the designated 5K kilometer points for runners at Quirino Avenue and Roxas Boulevard.

Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HAR), exclusive distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the Philippines since 2004 and now the third top-ranking automotive brand in the local industry, will give a 400 cm3 motorcycle pursuant to Ignatz Kalingo's entry to the 5K kilometer (BB-CDS, El Shibukhal's PVO, skating) for financially unchartered.

"This is our way of giving back to the community which has opened its doors to Hyundai and we believe for what this campaign has accomplished, our success are express," said Carl Vincent Agustin, Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. Assistant Vice President and CEO.

By Roy Luarca

BAUBO, ARGAN—Favorites Taguig City, UPSEA-A and Makati City-central dressed their strength by dominating their respective divisions in the eight-to-down that early lead to the 2011 Philippine Inter-Provincial Chess Team Championships at the Compound Training Center here.

Powered by Grandmaster Nicolas So, Taguig of Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino declared Asian-rest Chess Federation Club A, 4-0, while UPSEA-A, led by GM Allan Paul Cruzen, and Manuel Dalmed, [illegible] by GM Rich Pangan, posted the same score against Lanao Del Sur and ARC Team B, respectively.

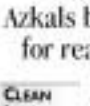
Entrenched Bukidnon-PCCF Bobo Club 54, Inc., UPSEA-B and Superintendent of Agusan Sultana QC, also notched 4-0 victories to share the lead-spin in the 20-team competition organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines and hosted by the Abbas provincial government through Gov. Cashi Mangudadatu.

So, the country's highest rated player with an Elo of 2667, Sun Jimmy Jimenez, in board one to spark Taguig-city's campaign, Allan Cruzen, Jun Gil Bing and Corey Lavina completed Taguig-city's romp with victories over Mary Hazel Lorens, Joseph Balleo and Bernard De Ocampo, respectively.

Three-time Olympian Cesario Cruzado of Roger Sodig is found 1-0 in all UPSEA-A's charge.

# Amazing Azkals bracing for real test

CLEAN LIVING



*Mariveles M. Mirasol*

[illegible] got, ... round (soccer) and ... pleasure themselves, the Philippine football[illegible], known as the Azkals, ... very well put the football in their sporting bosses.

They proved it ... a decline of double-digit ... in soccer ... to 5th about, the world's most popular sport which many pointed ... the sponsorships, television people and ... columnists have casually ignored, even laughed at.

But their perception about football has suddenly changed following the Azkals' string of widely unexpected victories, including their upset win over defending champ Tiger Cup champion Thailand. Here's a ... people now ... thoughts on aggregate scores, and their lopsided 3-0 humiliation of Bangladesh, to secure their in the semi-finals ... of the AFC Challenge Cup.

Boss, football diehards and officials of the Philippine Football Federation, led by PFF president Mariano "Nonong" Araneta and Azkals team manager Dan Palami, are ... enjoying their finger-chewing, ... supporting every ... for the contracts their bosses.

The Azkals hit a lot of their fellow underdogs in which the 2014 World Cup in Brazil by encouraging several [illegible] and demanding ... this is true, the Philippines' status ... underpinned but unpredictable by London ... in which round we have 20 in the bracket, ... home turf.

The Philippines broke the ... when they first ... down Tajikistan leader ... volunteer of the Philippines on [illegible] ... and ... point.

* * *

Recently awarded by the Philippine Sportswriters Association as "Executive of the Year" for his efforts in the ... PFF, ... putting it by [illegible] the season's team, Palami said the season's focus is to reach the third round of the World Cup Qualifying.

"Reaching the third round will be like surpassing the third stage of reaching the semifinals of the Suzuki Cup," said Palami.

After seeing action in the first round are Laos, Myanmar, Chinese-Taipei, Macau, Turkmenistan, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Mongolia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Nepal and Malaysia.

There will be eight matches in the three rounds of the home-and-away series, with the winners advancing 22 other ... the next round, where names will be drawn for another set of home-and-away clashes.

Israel Arabia, Jordan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Iraq, China and United Arab Emirates are already seeded in the second round. The 13 winners of this second round will advance to the group stage qualifying where Japan, South Korea, Australia and Bahrain are already seated.

* * *

The Azkals are now the new cage in town, but, I'm worried Azkals. What happens, Azkals, when you ... the ... [illegible] down? Do we honestly see more the sport ... football? Or is it just temporary fad?

Indeed, the Azkals' role in football glory is not a picnic. It's very difficult, to put it mildly. It's like pushing through the rest of a terrific load, but the way this team are ... dude the pedestrian way of maximizing resources-trained players with Filipino roots and luring a foreign coach, in the Azkals' case, Thomas Dooley of Germany.

But despite these tremendous odds, the Azkals are determined to leave a footprint, positive in the country's campaigns in the 2014 World Cup Qualifiers this time in Asia, and the next, the Philippines have competed in the World Cup qualifying series in 2010 in South Korea.

By TOP ONSIDE
At Santos Ana Park

# Pagunsan nails 2-shot triumph

JUVIC Pagunsan caps a nine-as-win performance with a trophy

By Cedrill P. Tupas

SAN RAFAEL, BULACAN—Juvic Pagunsan completed a nine-to-win victory in the opening leg of the ICTSI Philippine Is-ill Tour. Doing a 2-under-par 69 to rule the Royal Northwoods championship by two strokes [illegible] outstanding.

Pagunsan banked five of the first 11 holes to turn back the challenge of Jay Bayron and owns one-lone [illegible] at Dakila golf club.

It was the fourth title in the Tour for the seasoned swinging shotmaker from Bacolod, who picked up the talented's check of P200,000.

Bayron submitted a two-under 70 for a 208 total and claimed the runner-up prize of P130,000.

The Davao-born ace stayed within two strokes off Pagunsan with a 33 on the front nine, but a double bogey on 13, which Pagunsan also bogeyed, hurt his chances of catching up with the 22-year-old Asian Tour veteran.

Pagunsan collected his 29th point on the 18th to seal the victory, before rushing to the small gallery to hug his 6-year-old daughter, Li, and wife Lou.

"They are my lucky charms," said Pagunsan in Filipino, referring to his wife and daughter, who were also present when the former Asian Tour member of the year rewon the first tournament in the Asian Tour since it's [illegible] last year.

Former amateur standout Mhark Fernando wound up third with a final-round 70 for 211.

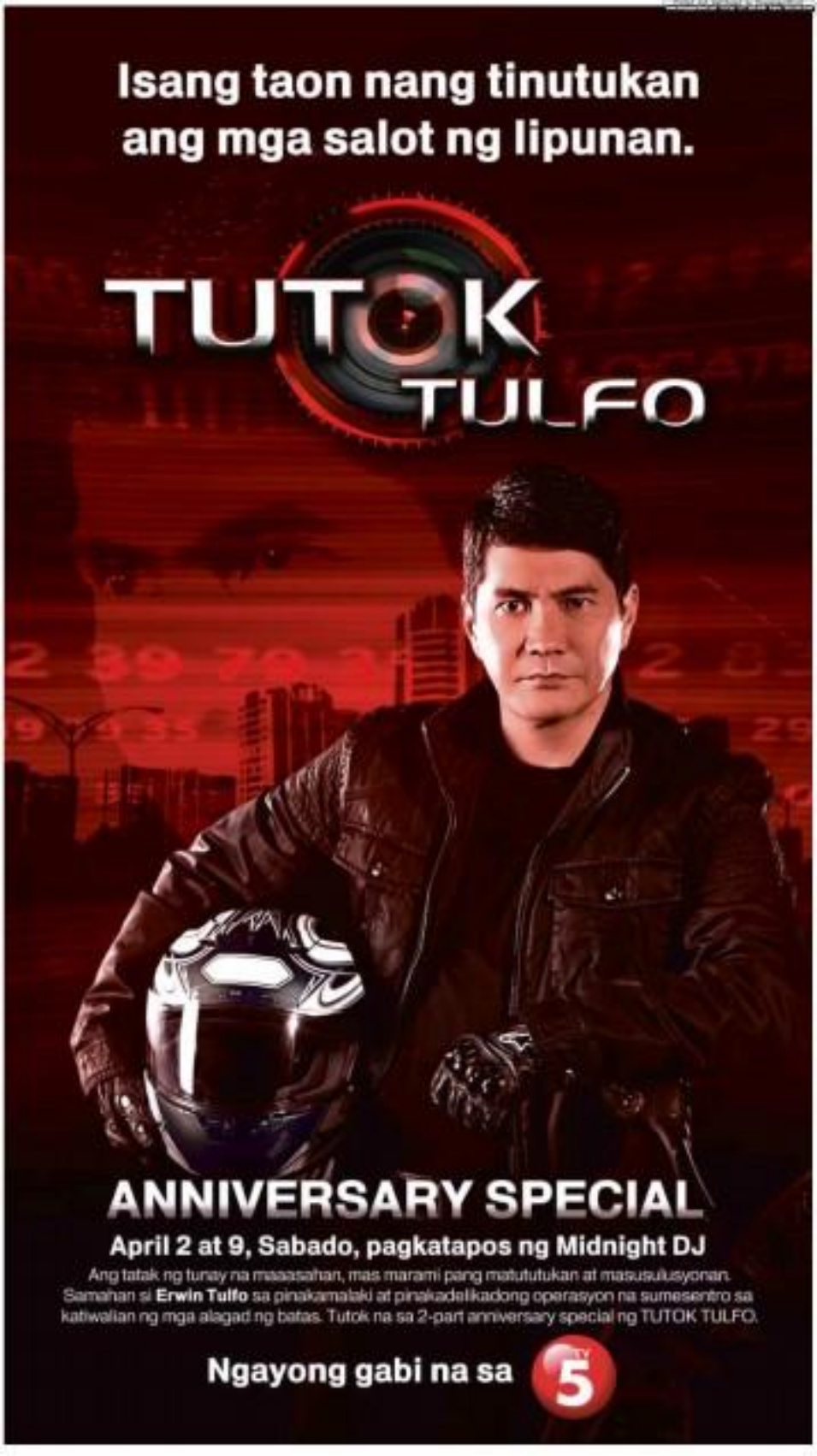
Anthony Fernando, who vaired just two shots off this pace with rounds of 69-71-74-heled after successive bogeys on 6 and 9, the finished with a 74 and is 212-holed.

Kevin Tan also shot steep a 68-71 start with a 68-69 in the final round. He ended up tied at 27th in the tournament sponsored by International Container Terminal Services, Inc., organized by Filipinas Golf Tournaments and backed by Mt Cor Golf Management. Scores:

**The final scores:** 208—1 Pagunsan (69-70-69), 210—2 Bayron (69-70-71), 211—3a Mhark Fernando (69-71-74), 212—3b Anthony Fernando (69-71-74), 214—4 Jason Dy (73-70-71), 215—5a Kevin Tan (68-71-76), 216—5b Jason Dy (73-71-72), 217—6a Jason Dy (73-71-73), 218—6b Jason Dy (73-71-74), 219—7a Jason Dy (73-71-75), 220—7b Jason Dy (73-71-76), 221—8a Jason Dy (73-71-77), 222—8b Jason Dy (73-71-78), 223—9a Jason Dy (73-71-79), 224—9b Jason Dy (73-71-80), 225—10a Jason Dy (73-71-81),

Isang taon nang tinutukan
ang mga salot ng lipunan.

# TUTOK TULFO



## ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

**April 2 at 9, Sabado, pagkatapos ng Midnight DJ**

Ang tatak ng tunay na maaasahan, mas marami pang matututukan at masusulusyonan. Samahan si **Erwin Tulfo** sa pinakamalaki at pinakadelikadong operasyon na sumesentro sa katiwalian ng mga alagad ng batas. Tutok na sa 2-part anniversary special ng TUTOK TULFO.

**Ngayong gabi na sa** 5

Aplus METRO
Edna Adelaida S. Ulanday

# Comelec orders recount in Taguig

## 2nd Division moves to resolve Tiñga, Cayetano dispute

By Jeremy Aning

THE COMMISSION on Elections' (Comelec) 2nd Division has ordered a recount of votes in Taguig City to resolve the protest filed by losing mayoral candidate Dante Tiñga against the proclaimed winner, incumbent Mayor Laarni Cayetano.

In an order dated March 30, the division ordered the retrieval of 400 contested ballot boxes in Taguig. The director of the Comelec's election and campaign department, Lawyer Peralta Elman, was told to deliver the boxes to the Comelec warehouse in Manila within three days from receipt of the ballot boxes from the city treasurer.

The order, penned by division chair Commissioner Elias Yusoph and concurred by Commissioner Armando Velasco, also junked the urgent motion for ocular inspection of Taguig City Auditor Cris filed by Cayetano.

The Comelec said Cayetano did not raise new issues that would warrant the reversal or revision of the 2nd Division's Jan. 20, 2011 order.

"The issues pertaining to the Comelec Philcon Warehouse's security is a moot subject of what has been previously raised, passed upon, and ruled against by the Commission," the order said.

The division also directed Ernesto Monfortte Mimicks, acting city treasurer, to turn over to Elman the contested ballot boxes immediately upon demand.

Cayetano's supporters have set up barricades in the treasury office here to prevent the transfer of the boxes.

They also filed a motion at the Comelec head office in Manila yesterday seeking to inhibit Elman for his alleged bias for Tiñga.

"There are accusations that he was once on the staff of former justice Tiñga. In fact, when he was not yet raided to retrieve the ballot boxes, he had been going to the Comelec warehouse, telling the custodians to make sure the ballot boxes fit there," Cayetano lawyer Lyle Suero told reporters.

Pasco added that the Cayetano camp also filed a motion to consign their election protest to the Comelec's 1st Division.

"Commissioner Yusoph did not give Mayor Cayetano a chance to answer new issues that came out regarding the election protest," Pasco said.

A few days after the May 2010 elections, Tiñga filed a protest asking for the nullification of Cayetano's proclamation and a recount of the ballots in 237 of 339 clustered precincts.

Tiñga claimed the city board of canvassers used "faulthi-tinuing" Persinet Luxon Optical Scan machines and "defective, reprogrammed, and/or reconfigured" compact flash cards containing the programs that run the machines.

# De Lima seeks probe of Ivler 'VIP treatment'

By Jeannie Aning and Nancy Carvajal

JUSTICE Secretary Leila de Lima yesterday joined calls to investigate the alleged VIP treatment given to detained mayor Rex Jason Ivler inside the Quezon City jail.

The jail warden has denied the charge, but admitted that parties are allowed inside the facility—but no liquor—upon the request of the inmate's family.

"It's really bothersome to hear reports about that, although all detainees and prisoners have rights, it becomes questionable if certain privileges are given to selected personalities just because they are interested, well paid or powerful," De Lima said.

She called on the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) to investigate Quezon City jail authorities on the alleged special treatment given to Ivler.

"Something must be implemented by the BJMP to make our prison system efficient and professional, and do away with abuses and excesses. Those who will be identified responsible should be held accountable administratively," De Lima said.

Senate Supt. Bernard Grande told the Inquirer that Ivler had received jail visitors in the past, but "not for nonlegal visits," adding that Ivler's access is confined only to family members.

The photos showing Ivler with a woman was taken during an outreach program of the inmate welfare program," Grande said.

"There is no VIP treatment. We are all treated the same," Ivler said in an interview on Cebu's Serbisyo Weekday.

In the same interview, he said the photos released on the Internet were taken in 2009, and the girls in the pictures were his cousins.

Ivler is facing murder charges for the death of Bonato Ebarle Jr., son of former Provincial Management Staff Chairman Bonato Ebarle, who died in a traffic altercation in November 2009.

He was arrested inside their house in Blue Ridge, Quezon City in January this year after evading authorities for some time.

Ivler was recruited when he engaged Ola-Trend Bureau of Internal Affairs agents in a shoot-out where they tried to arrest him.

**STREET PAINTING WINNER**

Members of Cobis Scribologics, of Pamantasan Gateway of the Philippines-Sta. Mesa, hold a huge chalk-and-charcoal artwork titled "Greatest Acts in Communication." The group won the grand prize of P75,000 and a special trophy at Ayala Town Center's 3D Street Painting Festival held recently in Muntinlupa City.

# 3 traffic cops in hot water

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THREE traffic policemen who allegedly extorted P80,000 from television host and comedian Arnell Ignacio in Pasay City last March 26 are facing summary dismissal proceedings.

Chief Supt. Leonardo Espina, head of the Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group, immediately relieved the three policemen from their post Friday after Ignacio personally reported the incident to him in Camp Crame.

Ignacio told Police Officers 2 Noel Pono and Jose Dagoro and PO2 Joel Lacida flagged down his 1997 Porsche 996 along C-5 corner Julia Vargas Avenue around 7:30 p.m. last Saturday.

He said the policemen insisted his car documents were not in order because the license plate was not properly attached to the car.

Espina said the three policemen denied that they extorted P80,000 from Ignacio but that they were drunk while on duty.

# P-noy confers sainthood on drug mules

PRESIDENT Noy has promised another brief football presentation for the families of Ramon Credo, Sally Villanueva and Elizabeth Batain who were executed in China for drug trafficking.

A radio-TV network has compared a prayer for the three drug couriers.

My own newspaper screamed in its [illegible] headline in its early edition: "Noynoy mourns for 3 Filipinos executed in China."

The Pentecostal, the major radio-TV network and my own paper are sending this message to the Filipino people: It pays to be a drug mule.

[illegible]

Why should we mourn for these lowlifes and criminals?

There were reports that Credo, Villanueva and Batain were overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

Wrong!

Their names are not registered in the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa).

They went to China on tourist visas.

* * *

Credo, Villanueva and Batain knew they were carrying drugs in their baggage.

What's the crazy person who would give one hoo-hoo to China and P20,000 pocket money plus more when they get there?

They were deceived by a drug syndicate!

Only President Noy, who was apparently born yesterday, would believe that!

* * *

There are 70 more Filipinos facing executions in various prisons in China for drug trafficking.

If we gave the families of those doomed to face the firing squad some cash, cottage and capital to start a business, our government would go bankrupt because many Filipinos would want to be drug mules to enjoy the entitlements.

* * *

While China is enforcing the Filipino drug traffickers, our Court of Appeals has been acquitting Chinese drug traffickers and manufacturers.

For example, Cai Xihe alias Chen Saldap was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2003 by a Pasig regional trial court for manufacturing "shabu" (methamphetamine hydrochloride).

Two years later, the Court of Appeals acquitted Cai Xihe.

You know what these justices said in acquitting Cai Xihe?

He failed to witness the incineration of the seized drugs while the police raiders were taking stock of them!

Cai Xihe and his accomplices were herded into another room.

In 2005, Cai Xihe was again arrested in Tabaco Village, Quezon City for [illegible] manufacturing shabu.

He's undergoing trial.

Expect Cai Xihe to be acquitted again by some corrupt justices at the Court of Appeals.

# The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Bueno

# Japan launches sea, air searches for dead

## Government says damaged nuke plant leaks radiation into groundwater

TOKYO—Thousands of Japanese and US troops launched an intensive air and sea operation on Friday to recover bodies still left from the huge earthquake and tsunami three weeks ago.

The grim search came as the government revealed radiation from a nuclear power plant crippled by the twin disaster had leeched found its groundwater, with contamination already reported in the air, ocean and soil.

Japan is still struggling to cope with its worst post-war crisis three weeks after the sea floor quake struck on March 11, leaving above 28,000 people dead or missing.

In the search for bodies, Japanese and US armed forces deployed 120 aircraft and 65 ships for a three-day operation along the northeast coast, where homes, ships, cars and trains still lay scattered across the shoddy wastelands.

Prime Minister Naoto Kan was to address the nation and then on Saturday fly to the devastated part of Miyagi prefecture, and 7-Eleven village," the base for hundreds of emergency crew who have battled at great risk to prevent a nuclear meltdown at the crippled Fukushima power plant.

Sony, who had dressed emergency workers' cuts to ease the disaster, cautioned its customers to Friday showing that he were not looking to "the next stage" of reassurance, government spokesperson Yukio Edano said.

At the Fukushima plant, which has been leaking radiation, workers resulted in spray coats on the rubble of blast-hit reactor buildings as part of three-tense step and go effort aimed at diverting the plant down.

The environmental impact was worsening, with high levels of iodine-131 found in groundwater 11 times below the plant's reactor No. 1 and at water about 8,000 times the maximum safe level permitted in the Pacific Ocean.

Vegetable, dairy and other food shipments from how prefectures in the area have been stopped because of radiation, while the health ministry said that now also been forced to feed from Tokyo away.

The government has issued assurances that no water or food contaminations had yet reached levels that would have an immediate impact on public health.

Japan's nuclear safety agency said Tokyo Electric Power Co. (Tepco), the much-criticized operator of the Fukushima nuclear plant, had for a time not had enough radiation counters for workers handing to stabilize the facility.

The agency had admonished Tepco, instructing it "to do the utmost to manage workers' exposure levels," and by Friday it had received enough monitors for its emergency crews, said agency spokesperson Hidehiko Nishiyama.

Tepco, one of the world's largest utilities, could face huge costs and compensation claims, but it may end up receiving taxpayers money because of the need to maintain a stable power supply, local media said.

"It's not an option we've ruled out so far," Yukio Edano told Lawmaker press briefing, responding to media reports stating that a fund injection was under consideration.

Japan has received a pledge from the US nuclear watchdog that it would to reclaim the 20-km evacuation zone around the nuclear plant and clear people out of the village of Iitate, 40 km northwest of the facility. AFP

# US soon ending air combat role in Libya

WASHINGTON—The Pentagon is about to pull its attack planes out of the international air campaign in Libya, hoping Nato partners can take up the slack.

The announcement Thursday drew immediate reactions from some in Congress who wondered aloud why the Obama administration would hand over all key elements of the strategy for protecting Libyan civilians and crippling Moammar Gadhafi's army.

"Odd," "troubling" and "unnerving" were among critical comments by senators pressing for an explanation of the announcement by Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Joint Chiefs chair Adm. Mike Mullen that American combat missions will end Saturday.

"Your timing is exquisite," Republican Sen. John McCain said sarcastically, alluding to Gadhafi's military advances this week.

Gates and Mullen, in back-to-back appearances before the House of Representatives and Senate armed services committees, also forcefully argued against putting the US in the role of arming or training Libyan rebel forces, while suggesting it might be a job for Arab or other countries. The White House has said repeatedly that it has not ruled out arming the rebels, who have extremely limited capability, but would prefer the pursuit of a renewed season of pressure by Gadhafi's home around and better-trained ground troops.

"My view would be, if there is going to be that kind of assistance to the opposition, there are plenty of sources for it other than the United States," Gates said.

The White House press secretary Jay Carney, said he saw no contradiction between Gates' remarks and President Barack Obama's clear statement that "he has not ruled it in or out." In any event of Obama's top advisers have publicly advocated a significant expansion of the US role aiding the opposition.

Gates and Mullen noted early skeptics of getting involved militarily in Libya, and Gates made clear Thursday that he still worries about the possibility of getting drawn into an open-ended and costly commitment. That explains in part his view that if the rebels are to receive foreign arms, that is the job for the Europeans and not necessarily go with it—should not be done by Americans.

Gates said no one should be surprised by the US combat air pullback, but he called the timing "unfortunate" in light of Gadhafi's battlefield gains. He noted that the air attacks are a central feature of the overall military strategy, over time they could degrade Gadhafi's firepower to a point that he would be unable to put down a renewed uprising by opponents of his rule.

Mullen and Gates stressed that even though powerful combat aircraft like the side-firing AC-130 gunship and the A-10 "Tree Avenger" will be among those left behind, the US will still have a significant military presence in the region, with high levels of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) assets, refueling aircraft and search-and-rescue capabilities.

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## WORLDBRIEFS

### 3 mail bombs explode in Europe, injuring 3

ROME—A letter bomb seriously wounded a senior Italian Army official in Livorno on Thursday, the Army said in a statement. An Italian anarchist group, the Informal Anarchist Federation, took responsibility for the attack, the Army said. The same group was responsible for sending three letter bombs to embassies in Rome in December that wounded two people seriously, according to the Italian news media. The explosive may also have been added to two other bombs delivered in Europe on Thursday. A letter bomb was delivered at a Greek prison and another exploded at an office of the Swiss nuclear power industry in the northern city of Olten, injuring two people. The Greek police said the letter bomb sent to the prison was addressed to Athens bank prototype manager Ilonni Revenue. It was not immediately clear who had sent the letter bombs in Greece and Switzerland. *New York Times News Service*

### Vietnam clamps down on independent Christians

BANGKOK—Vietnam has increased repression of indigenous minority Christians in the country's Central Highlands, closing small informal churches, compelling public renunciations of faith and arresting worshippers, Human Rights Watch said in a report on Thursday. The 148-page report, based on interviews with 70 members of the ethnic minorities, known as Montagnards, are traditionally animist but have been converted to Christianity in large numbers over the past half century. Culturally and ethnically distinct from the majority Ivanland Vietnamese, the believers are only clandestinely in informal settings known as house churches, which are illegal under Vietnamese law. "Montagnards have harsh persecution in Vietnam, particularly those who worship in independent house churches, because the authorities don't tolerate religions actively outside their sight or control," said Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director of Human Rights Watch, which is based in Bangkok and New York. "The Vietnamese government has been steadily tightening the screws on independent Montagnard religious groups, claiming they are using religion to incite unrest." *New York Times News Service*

### Geraldine Ferraro hailed at her funeral

NEW YORK—In vivid testimonials from some of the most visible political voices in the country, Geraldine A. Ferraro was recalled on Thursday as a pioneer with "true grit" and a sense of humor who blazed a trail for future generations of women. "Gerry and I are often linked together," said Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who, like her husband, spoke at a funeral service for Ferraro, the former Democratic vice presidential candidate and congresswoman from Queens. N.Y. "She is sure correctly on saving the way for my political career and those of many other women. Whenever we met, she always encouraged me and gave me gift. All of us brought new thoughts and imagined new possibilities because of Gerry," former Vice President Walter F. Mondale said that after Ferraro became his running mate in the 1984 presidential race, making her the first female candidate for vice president from a major party, she suggested that Ferraro help if he "treated her as if she were a male, white-haired senator from Texas." Mondale said the truth Ferraro took was not an easy one. During a vice-presidential debate, "George Bush offered to explain to her foreign policy," Mondale recalled. "Every day we was patronized in a way not experienced by male candidates. If they ever make another movie about them all, it should be about Gerry." The service for Ferraro, who died on Saturday at age 75 after a long battle with cancer, took place on an overcast day at the Church of St. Vincent Ferrer on Manhattan, where Ferraro married John Zaccaro in 1960. *New York Times News Service*

# How to Choose the Right Financing Scheme for your Dream Home

Property developers nowadays seem to offer a good deal by providing easy-to-own financing packages. However, a closer look at their financing schemes shows a program that is not as attractive as advertised. A lot of factors must be considered before you can finally say that a certain payment scheme is the best one for you. Among these factors are the equity or downpayment (DP), interest rates on the loanable amount, inclusive projects, move-in schedule in relation to payments made, and the credibility of company providing the scheme.

The usual DP scheme offered in the market is 20 % of the total contract price (TCP) spread over 12 months. Other developers spread the DP over 24 months, termed as "stretched downpayment". The idea behind stretching the DP is to make the monthly equity payment as low as possible so that it is more affordable to consumers.

To reduce the amount of equity payments even further, property developers come up with innovative financing schemes, such as 5% or even 0% DP. At first glance, you may think that the "lower" the DP is, the better. However, you must be wary of sudden balloon payments and hidden charges that are added on the monthly amortization (or the payments to be made after the DP stage) that simply repackage the standard 20% DP scheme.

After the completion of DP, you have to check on the interest rates available for the loanable amount. Most property developers today offer either in-house or bank financing, the latter being pushed more because of the lower monthly amortization that it entails for the buyers. However, interest rates for bank loans must be checked as well. Interest rates fluctuate and usually move upward. Rather than "low interest rates", what you have to ensure, more importantly, is that the interest rate for your loan is locked-in. This safeguards you from any sudden changes in the interest rate.

You must also consider the coverage of the financing scheme offered by the developers. Some developers grant the scheme only to projects that fall within a certain price range. Thus, you may not actually enjoy your dream home if it is below or above a stipulated price bracket.

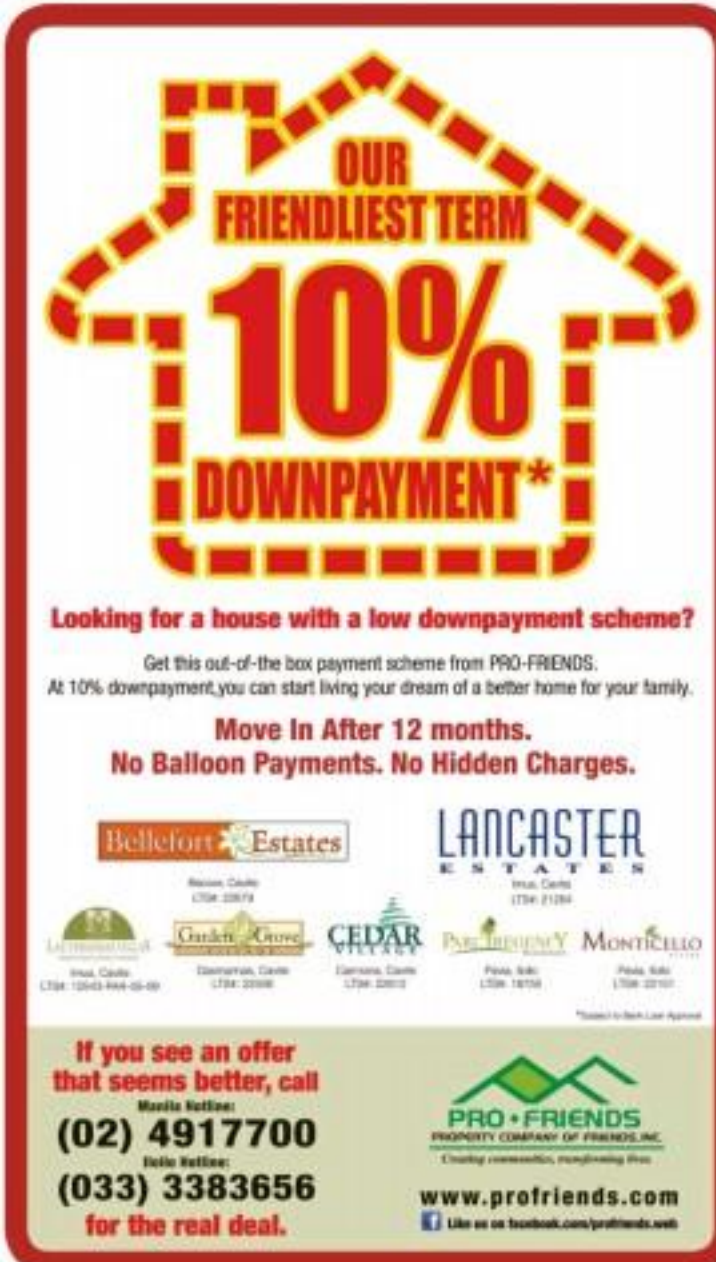
Apart from the financing scheme, however, the ease of moving in must also be considered. The rule is, the earlier the move-in schedule, the better. For units that are still for construction, most developers turn over the unit for move-in after the completion of DP. For some developers, move-in is scheduled while the buyer is still in the DP stage. Go for the option that best suits your needs.

Finally, always avail from dependable and trustworthy property developers. Availing your dream home from property developers guarantees that you are in good hands. An example of a property developer that offers an innovative financing scheme in the market today is PRO-FRIENDS. PRO-FRIENDS is a reliable and trusted property developer that has been in the industry for more than a decade now. PRO-FRIENDS currently offers its friendliest bank financing scheme - 10% DP term, with no balloon payments, no hidden charges, and with move-in after 12 months, for units that are still for construction. For ready for occupancy units, the 10% DP is payable in six months and the move-in is scheduled on the seventh month.

PRO-FRIENDS is committed to making the dreams of Filipinos of owning their dream homes much easier by offering the honest to goodness deal. A Php 1.08 million house and lot in Lancaster Estates in Imus, Cavite, for example, only costs Php 8,257/month for 12 months during the DP stage, and Php 8,474/month for 20 years during the amortization stage.

This special financing scheme, which runs from March 1 to June 30, 2011, is available in select PRO-FRIENDS properties regardless of the price. Within this period, the interest rate for the bank loan is locked in at 10%, so you are assured of a truly worry-free purchase within the specified period.

You've worked hard for years to realize your dream of having your own home. Let PRO-FRIENDS help you in realizing this dream. To learn more about PRO-FRIENDS and its innovative financing scheme, call (02) 491-7700 (Manila Hotline) or (033) 338-3656 (Iloilo Hotline). You may also visit www.profriends.com.

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Editor Raul O. Morales • Assistant Editor Cecile S. Mariano

# BUSINESS


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# Scrapping of tax perk for US firms eyed

## Proposal is part of gov't program to rationalize incentives

By Ramon W. Dominguez

THE TAX holiday granted to lure American companies to invest in the Philippines should be scrapped as part of the Aquino administration's program to rationalize incentives, according to Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima.

Purisima said such perks were not necessary because of symmetry between the United States and the Philippines with regard to double taxation.

The finance chief explained that under the treaty, a tax paid in the Philippines would be credited from taxes due from a parent company in the United States.

"By giving [US firms] a tax holiday we are just waiving the tax that we would have collected here in the US, and that's not a very smart way of doing things," Purisima said.

He said this was one of many ways to streamline investment perks, adding that "there

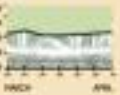
SCRAPPING B2

## INDICATORS

### PESO-DOLLAR RATE

April 1, 2011

43.360



### STOCK MARKET

April 1, 2011

74.40

### Stocks end higher

LOCAL SHARES extended their winning streak yesterday, still riding on the telecom euphoria alongside renewed foreign investor confidence on local economic fundamentals.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index added 19.40 points or 1.33 percent to finish at 1,725.04. For the entire week, the index gained 29.0 72 points or 0.5 percent as the PLDT, Digital consolidation deals brought back excitement to the maturing telecom industry.

Index heavyweight PLDT, which has a 15 percent weight on the index, rewarded its optimists after the company this 's pieces, rising 1.33 percent to P 2,868.

Rival Globe Telecom recorded its profit-taking for the session, giving up 2.0 percent to close at P808.

PLDT, which will soon control 78 percent of the telecom market, has reiterated that it would keep the cheap, unlimited voice and text messaging services offered by Sun Cellular, whose operator Digital 8 would acquire in a P74 billion deal with the Gokongweis. Global credit watcher Fitch Ratings has also said PLDT on a "positive" watch, noting that the acquisition would address concerns over declining telecom margins by "easing price-based

STOCKS B2

# Gov't urged to develop retirement villages

By Abigail L. Ho

THE EUROPEAN Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines is pushing the government to partner with real estate firms for the development of retirement villages in the country as the Philippines has the potential to become a retirement hub for the aging population of Japan and Europe.

In an interview with reporters, ECCP vice president for external affairs Henry Schumacher said developers have not fully realized the potential of retirement villages as almost all of them were more focused on for-selling developments such as condominium buildings.

However, given the country's attractive climate for retirees and the huge wave of aging individuals in Europe and Japan, he said the potential market for retirement villages was very big. It would be even bigger with government support.

"We'd like to see [public-private partnerships] in terms of putting up retirement villages. The governments of Europe, Japan and the United States are aware of the 'tsunami' of old people in their areas. They have demands and these should be met somehow. I believe the Philippines is the next destination for them," he said.

"If we want to attract these retirees, we need to get the product out first, and these are retirement villages that combine lifestyle, community and healthcare. In Europe, they

GOV'T | B3

# 'Open skies' seen to boost tourism

## MBC backs aviation EO

By Abigail L. Hu

THE ISSUANCE of EO 20, which partially opens the country's skies to foreign carriers, will boost not only the country's tourism potential, but also its attractiveness as an investment destination.

According to the Makati Business Club, the benefits of EO 20 would outweigh whatever disadvantages being enumerated by businessmen.

"The absence of air rights reciprocity is not an indication of the absence of any form of reciprocity. The economic potential of EO 20, especially in bringing in more tourists resulting in the generation of new jobs and the stimulation of the local economy is the reciprocal benefit of the open skies policy that is expected to impact millions of Filipinos," the group said in a statement issued yesterday.

The group noted that opening the country's major and secondary gateways to foreign carriers would better enable the country to achieve its goal of attracting six million tourists and generating $10.3 billion in tourism revenues. The influx of tourists would then result in the creation of three million new tourism related jobs by 2016.

"The success of the tourism industry lies in the realization of EO 20, together with the full implementation of the tourism infrastructure plans laid out by Tourism Secretary Alberto Lim," MBC said.

"Developing and improving our airports, attracting investments in tourism establishments, upgrading our unique products and services, and addressing the security risks identified by the US Federal Aviation Authority is in order to upgrade the country back to Category 1 are the next big steps that we hope the Aquino administration will pursue," it added.

Tourism would not be the only sector that would benefit from EO 20, MBC said. The implementation of pocket open skies would also boost the country's competitiveness as an investment location, as well as stimulate economic opportunities in different regions in the country.

"The issuance of EO 20, signed together with EO 28, which reconstitutes and reorganizes the Philippine air panels, is a clear indication of the government's focus and dedication to synergize actions aimed at direct economic growth," the group said.

# Shang Property buys Asian Plaza condo, lot

By Doris C. Dumlao

UPSCALE PROPERTY developer Shang Property Developers Inc. has acquired the Pinatau group's Asian Plaza office condominium property, which sits on a prime location in Makati City that is suitable for personal redevelopment, for P615 million.

It is disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Shang Property announced an agreement with Asian Plaza Inc. and Asian Plaza II Condominium Corp. to acquire their respective pieces of real property—a five-story building and parcels of land located in the corner of Gil Puyat Ave., Herbosilla St. and Dela Costa St.

Pinatau president Ramon dela Fuente Jr. said the acquisition price was higher than the P500 million floor price set in 2006 when the property was placed on the auction block.

According to property consultant Colliers International, as the exclusive marketing agent mandated by Pinatau to auction the property, the five-story condominium building has a gross floor area of 26,218 square meters and a single level onsite parking for 57 slots.

The property was completed in 1982 and fully renovated in 2000. The building will be handed over on an "as is, where is" basis, based on an online brochure from Colliers.

Asian Plaza is 100 percent occupied by Advanced Contact Solutions, Jollibee and the Travel Corp., the brochure said.

"The property is suitable for redevelopment subject to meeting the necessary planning and zoning regulations," Colliers said.

The property consultant said the Asian Plaza property was "well positioned in close proximity to shopping malls, restaurants, entertainment venues and major office buildings and embassies located in the Makati central business district."

It was reported in 2006 that the floor price for the Asian Plaza property was set at P500 million, but the value of the actual deal was not disclosed.

Shang Property is a property development, real estate management and investment holding company with interests in upscale hotels, shopping mall and residential properties. Its significant and active subsidiaries are Shangri-La Plaza Corp., SPI Subang Investment Inc., Shang Properties Realty Corp., DPH Logistics Holdings, Inc., Shang Global City Holdings, Inc., Shang Noy Bonifacio Holdings, Inc., Shang Property Management Services Corp. and BSA Realty Corp.

# Scrapping of tax perk . . .

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is simply too many agencies that give incentives and we need to rationalize [the system]."

Pernia said he was not altogether against the granting of fiscal incentives, adding that such perks were needed to attract companies into the Philippines because of the various inefficiencies of the country's system.

"But we're giving out certain things that are not necessary," he said.

For his part, Pernia also said he was keen on a proposal to earmark revenues from the real property tax imposed by local government units for education programs.

He was referring to a proposal put forward by University of the Philippines economist Benjamin E. Diokno, who until President Aquino's campaign promise of mandated spending for social services while imposing no new taxes, and keeping the budget deficit to 2 percent of Gross Domestic Product by 2013, was "not internally consistent [and] not possible to fulfill... simultaneously."

Himself a former budget secretary, Diokno suggested, among other tax reforms, for the national government to piggyback on the real property tax (RPT) imposed by local government units.

# Gov't urged to develop . . .

From page B1

don't look after their old people. They pass that responsibility on to the government. In the Philippines, this is not the case. We should take advantage of this," he added.

One possible project that could be pursued under the PPP model, he said, was the development of Argao Beach in Cebu. Two hours from the international airport and around an hour from a tertiary hospital, the area provided the right mix of lifestyle, economy and healthcare for retirees.

The land, he said, is owned by the former Philippine Tourism Authority. Under the PPP setup, the government would provide the land while the private sector could undertake the development of the retirement village.

Other potential retirement village sites are Clark, Subic, Tagaytay, Naujan, Dumaguete and Shrine Mandia, he said.

# Stocks end higher

From page B1

competition and creating a more favorable industry duopoly structure in the short-term."

Overall mood was upbeat throughout the session as foreign investors went back for local bargains, allowing the index to breach a key barrier at 4,300.

"Foreign funds have shown renewed interest in the market on the back of generally optimistic outlook for the economy this year," said PNB Securities deputy head Manuel Lisbona.

Value turnover amounted to P6.36 billion. There was P980 million in net foreign buying for the day. There were 74 advancers as against 67 decliners while 46 stocks were unchanged.

The upswing was led by the financial, industrial and property counters, which jumped 2.36 percent, 2.6 percent and 2 percent, respectively.

The local stock market shrugged off a lackluster overnight trading in Wall Street. The Dow Jones Industrial Index was down 30.88 points or 0.25 percent to 12,319.73 on Thursday. Doris C. Dumlao


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# Panay Island gets relief from power supply shortage

## Metrobank group inaugurates facility

By Amy R. Borlaza

ILOILO CITY—The island of Panay is finally getting relief from power outages over the next 10 years following the commissioning of Panay Energy Development Corp.'s 164-megawatt clean coal-fired power plant.

Ginnge S.E. Ty chair of the Metrobank group, made the announcement yesterday at the sidelines of the inauguration ceremonies here for the recently completed $405-million coal-fired facility. The Metrobank group has a stake in PEDC through Global Business Power Corp.

PEDC's power plant, which was completed last March 26, was said to be the biggest investment of the Metrobank group on the island and it also the first coal-fired, base load facility to be established here.

PEDC said its power plant was in line with Global Business Power's campaign for "cleaner, transitional technology to effectively address electric power deficiencies the Visayas while renewable energy sources are being strengthened and identified."

President Aquino led the inaugural also for the coal-fired power plant in Barangay Ingore, in Pavi yesterday, adjusting what PEDC said will "ensure quality and stability of power in the region."

The President said the lack of access to electricity was a major drawback in the development of the economy as it would hinder the government from providing basic services to the people. The unwarranted switching on of the PEDC power plant was like switching on the capability of the country to send infrastructure.

Adequate energy he added, would spur investments that would uplift the economic lives of the localities.

"It is our vision to help propel Iloilo City toward further economic growth and development. The PEDC plant is a $405-million investment on Panay Island with a P140-billion power-generating capacity which ensures stable, reliable and cost-efficient electricity generation while reducing electricity cost volatility," added PEDC chair Francisco Ty Modesto.

Residents on Panay Island have been plagued by power interruptions expected on a daily basis due to the lack of generation capacity in the Visayas, along with the limited capacity of the Negros-Panay submarine cable to deliver electricity across the islands. In 2009 the island registered its highest power supply deficit of 60 MW.

PEDC then began construction of the coal power plant in January 2008, using the so-called clean coal technology through its technical partner Kansai Electric Inc/Electric of Tokyo.

"Recognizing the need for a baseload power plant in Panay which will not sacrifice the environment, the company chose to use clean coal technology as this was well-suited and compliant with environmental requirements and limitations," PEDC said in fact sheet.

The first 82.5-MW unit of PEDC's coal power plant was synchronized with the Cebu-Negros-Panay (CNP) grid in November 2010 while the second unit was connected in February this year through the newly completed 138-kilovolt interconnection line to the Interface substation.

PEDC has signed contracts for power supply agreements with seven electric cooperatives, namely Iloilo Electric Cooperative I, II and III, Guimaras Electric Cooperative, Capiz Electric Cooperative, and the Aklan Electric Cooperative.

## The Blessings of 2011: Heroes of Business and Filipino Pride
## PLDT SME Nation launches Cebu's very own Blessings

Cebu City, Philippines, March 29, 2011-The Blessing Awards 2011 campaign, with the theme, "Heroes of Business and Filipino Pride" recognized the 17 of the country's top entrepreneurs. After the successful launch of the Blessing Awards campaign in 2010, PLDT SME Nation presented its new name for 2011, together with five Cebu-based entrepreneurs dubbed as "Cebu Blessings of 2011". A source of national pride and inspiration, they also stand as living proof of true Filipino business ingenuity.

"The Filipino entrepreneur can rewrite history by pushing the economy on the top. PLDT SME Nation is committed to enable our SMEs through technology and make them globally competitive" said PLDT SME Nation VP and Head, Ma. Lucia Hernando. "And our customers could not agree more. They realize that embracing technology as part of their business operations is no longer a choice, but an imperative to survive in this highly competitive marketplace."

Those 17 individuals form the roster of the 2011 Blessings. They are Cecilio Pedro from Lampiao Corporation; Sandiganbayan Justice of Barbara Cochran, Benito Ramos of Ben's Coffee; Conrad I. Dragon/CIDC Amadeo Rodriguez of Basilan City Mayor Rose Furigay; Bam Aquino and Mark Ruiz of Hapinoy, the Respective of Potato Corner; Nelson and Stu Ping Pei of PR Gas; Hans, Pey and Anais Lopez of Fr. Land's Chrysanthemum and Barbarossa; Henry Lim Sim Liong of SL Agritech; Bobby and Joji Cheng of Tokyo Tokyo, Pearl Modelo and Ring Mendiola of Hublo Glass.

Complemented by Miss Lopez of Go Negosyo and 2010 Blessing Jay Mabayad of Mabayad Souvenirs, Cebu Blessings of 2011 namely, Pragmatic Board of TEL Rubin Concepcion of Anabo, Alex Chuacheng of Mario Leviste, Glenn Kolleong of Harbor Dreams and Rosenda R. Villa of Lyn Hospital, joined this year's roster of PLDT SME Nation Blessings.

The "Blessing Hero" campaign aims tribute to successful and inspiring icons of business while highlighting their choice of PLDT SME Nation's technology solutions. Hosted by DJ Logan and SUBI Mo. Philippines-Metro Manila Digit, the event gathered prominent SME business owners, executives, officials and interesting business and lifestyle personalities.

Special exhibitions were also set up by brands Souvenirs, Potato Corner, 8 Layers, Harbor Dreams, Mabayad Wax Metal Works, Shipwreck, Lyn Throop, Ben's Coffee, BC Home Boutique, and Ben's Coffee.

The event also closed the stage with Heroes in the Net in Arts & Design with the world renowned designer, Kenneth Cobonpue, of Cebu and Bacolod Artists, Pity Mark Del Monte of International Junior Master and of Public Service & Urban Development, Gov. Gwen Garcia.

The Blessing campaign conveniently promotes this use of information and communications technology (ICT) to further optimize business operations as well as the management and control capabilities of businessmen themselves. Demonstrating the benefits of technology to the SME sector and upholding the commitments SME's have to the country's growth, PLDT SME Nation honors leading technology to enable SME's business with greater insights for themselves and the nation.

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# Telco margins seen to pick up

## DMCI, Trans-Asia to put up 135-MW power plant

By Amy R. Remo

PUBLICLY LISTED Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp. (TA-OIL) recently signed a contract with DM Consunji Inc. for the construction of a 135-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Batangas.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Trans-Asia reported that the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) deal was sealed last Thursday. The contract will allow Trans-Asia to proceed with its power project, which it hopes to complete by 2014.

The proposed clean coal power facility, which would be Trans-Asia's first base-load plant to supply its own energy supply business, was earlier estimated to cost P8.5 billion, of which 60 percent would be financed by loans. The company's existing equity would account for the remaining 40 percent.

Trans-Asia earlier reported that its Batangas coal project would have significantly lower carbon emissions than other coal-fired generating plants.

Clean coal technology relies on circulating fluidized bed technology that minimizes the environmental impact of coal-fired plants through lower carbon, sulfur oxide and nitrogen oxide emissions, the company said. Emission rates from clean coal plants are estimated to be about 60 percent lower than the existing requirements of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Trans-Asia earlier said that it wanted to source its coal from the Grasberg Joint Ventures Coal Corp., which produces coal with low-sulfur content.

The company said that the proposed site of the plant in Sitio Pantog Bato Sekat, Calaca, Batangas would be ideal due to its ease of interconnection with the Luzon power grid.

## Fitch: Deal may lead to favorable duopoly setting

By Paolo G. Montecillo

GLOBAL DEBT monitor Fitch Ratings expects revenues and profit margins of the local telco industry to improve following the acquisition of San Miguel Corp.'s stake in wireless Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT).

Even with PLDT's assurance earlier this week that San Miguel's "unlimited" call and text services would be retained and improved, Fitch Ratings said competition based on prices, instead of quality of service, would moderate.

"Philippine telcos are currently challenged by declining average revenue per user, due largely to price-based competition" sparked by Digitel Telecommunications Philippines Inc., operator of the Sun Cellular brand, until PLDT's rival, an analyst at the ratings firm. Fitch believes that the potential acquisition would address this concern by easing price-based competition and creating a more favorable ... duopoly structure in the short term."

Fitch said it had put PLDT's long-term, peso denominated global bonds on a Ratings Positive Watch, adding that the 'BBB' rating would be upgraded once the takeover of Digitel is completed. This is already two notches higher than the respective peso government debt paper.

Fitch also affirmed its 'BB+' and 'BAA' ratings on PLDT's long-term foreign-currency and national long-term bonds with stable outlook.

Debt ratings reflect a company's ability to meet maturing obligations, which is a sign of its financial health.

Fitch said PLDT would end up as the undisputed industry leader, capturing 76 percent of subscribers and 88 percent of revenues after the acquisition.

Also, Fitch said the PLDT-Digitel deal would be no means create an environment where a single company could dictate rates—a condition seen to be bad for consumers who have been enjoying the benefits of a competitive market.

## Aboitiz power unit acquires Luzon Hydro Corp. for $30M

ABOITIZ RENEWABLES Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Aboitiz Power Corp. (APC), "has fully acquired Luzon Hydro Corp. from its partner for an estimated $30 million.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange the other day, APC said a trustee confirm of agreement already had been signed with Pacific Hydro (Indus Inc. and Luzon Hydro, giving the Aboitiz-led renewable energy firm full ownership over Luzon Hydro.

Pacific Hydro, a subsidiary of Pacific Hydro Pty Ltd. of Australia, is Aboitiz Renewables' joint venture partner in Luzon Hydro Corp., which currently owns and operates the 73-megawatt Ilaksan run-of-river hydropower plant in Ilocos Sur.

The Ilaksan facility started commercial operations in 2008 under a build-operate-transfer deal with the state-run National Power Corp.

"Aboitiz Renewables will continue full ownership and control of LHC upon fulfillment of certain conditions in the SPA," APC added in its disclosure.

Currently, the contracted capacity of the Ilaksan facility is being managed by Aboitiz Power Holdings Inc., after it offered the highest bid of $145 million for both the Ilaksan and the 50.2MW Singuan mini-hydro power plant in December 2009.

Prior to the transfer of the management of contracted capacities, independent power producers (IPPs) supplied electricity to bigger Once management of the IPP contracts had been turned over to the private sector, the winning bidder would have to manage the contracted capacities, as well as provide fuel to be used in the power plants.

— Amy R. Remo

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Editor Cesar G. Mangaoang
SCIENCE/HEALTH
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# Trauma surgeon turns 'pain killer'

Text and photo by Tessa P. Salazar

INSTEAD OF using the knife, this trauma surgeon had turned instead to muscle manipulation.

For 15 years, Dr. Christian Emmanuel V. Manzano had worked in hospitals in the Middle East, operating on patients severely injured from automobile accidents. He has also been closely shifting his medical focus for the past 20 years to chronic muscle pain management while serving as consultant and resource speaker for multinational companies.

Now, Manzano has revealed in bygone Science/Health his project to do the corporate rounds, document and treat company employees who complain of chronic pain. He observed that an underestimated number of employees go to work but are not 100-percent productive, as shown by employees with "overextended referrals and sick leaves extended to vacation leaves, are always absent, or are no longer functional, and many just resort to be 'resigned.'"

"It's because they're always in pain. Whether it is just a knee, or the back. There are a lot of office cases," he said.

After two decades and after looking over more than 80,000 patients in the United States, Hong Kong, Russia, Lumpur and in the Philippines, Manzano has applied what he calls the Manzano Myofascial Release Technique for chronic muscle pain syndromes, which he described as "a 15-second manipulation of the upper extremities that immediately improves or alleviates pain without the use of drugs or medicines."

He added that among the chronic muscle pain syndromes that his technique can relieve in seconds are severe migraine attacks (less than 5 seconds), neck pain/stiffness, frozen shoulders, tennis/golfer's elbow and many upper body pains (in 15 seconds), or severe low back pain/sciatica (within another 30 seconds).

He related that some patients are so surprised with the immediate results that they are not used to being pain free. "When you remove the migraine, patients will look for it the next day because they have pain personalities already."

Manzano, who obtained his medical degree from the University of Santo Tomas in 1973, took his surgical residency and post-graduate studies at the Silliman University Medical Center and the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital. He maintains that his procedure is not physical, noninvasive and economical. "It is based on the principle of maximum love, endorphin released through the application of 1.5 kg force at a specific point at the base of the neck, immediately followed by a fast (ballistic) manipulation of the neck, shoulders and hips to reset the skeletal muscle tone of the whole body to attain maximum range of motion. This restores the resting muscle tension and length in both sides of the body."

Having his arms to the Middle East, Manzano had also treated soldiers and civilians injured during Desert Storm. "It was frustrating to operate for 14 to 16 hours on one patient who had been strangled," he recounted.

In Saudi Arabia, where high-speed car accidents are frequent occurrences, those patients who do survive often have a lifetime of pain. "When they recover (from their injuries), they feel terrible chronic pain. So what am I left with? Will drugs be the solution to these problems? Drugs are making them worse, actually."

MANCAO manipulates muscles of a serious employee.

## Drug pushers

He narrated: "More than 35 years of surgery had been frustrating because, if patients were not in a coma, they were in terrible pain. And when they were in chronic pain, we doctors became drug pushers. So the moment a time I was thinking, perhaps I hold the key so that patients can relax immediately and become pain-free. I have every nook and cranny of the human head, neck and shoulder, so I tried manipulating those areas in one patient in a beach hospital."

That particular patient was a female who had suffered a stroke three years prior, and who described her life as "very miserable"—she could barely manage to walk a few steps for 15 minutes using a walking cane before slowing down in pain and soreness. Manzano decided to manipulate her head, neck and shoulder while she lay down a magnotherapy machine, exerting her usual therapy.

The result was immediate. "We were surprised. She walked the same distance for only two minutes. She celebrated. The problem was the story spread. They then started coming to handle clients with selected pain, and all the stroke patients in that hospital." The no-drug, manipulation-only intervention method of Manzano was born. Hospital life would never be the same. He would miss him.

## Philippine College of Emergency Medicine convention

THE NEWLY merged Philippine College of Emergency Medicine (formerly known as PSECP and PCEMBEM) will hold its first annual convention on April 11-12 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Ballroom with the theme "EM: Common Goal, Common Vision."

Topics include Highlights of the 2010 ILCOR updates in BLS, ACLS; Disaster management; Therapeutic Hypothermia; Trauma Care in Mass Casualty; Organ Donation in the ED. For details, call up Regie or Dr. Glen Gabriel at 7482189 or e-mail at psecp.em@gmail.com.

DKT Philippines country manager Silvio Botelho, DKT India country director Patrick Luceral and FHI360 Condoms product manager Maureen Campos attend the opening of UP Fair 2011 in its campaign to educate UP students against unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

# *Lung experts renew drive vs deadly infection*

By Charlie E. Bolzan

NOT EVERYBODY who has lung infection knew the seriousness of his/her condition. Mistaking his/her condition for something else—like a serious case of the common cold—a lung infection like flu may lead to longer hospital stays, serious complications and even death.

This is why the country's experts on lung infection will once again remind the public about the potential severity of flu and other even healthy individuals should not be complacent about it.

According to Dr. Patrick Magpili, chair of the Philippine College of Chest Physicians's Council on Lung Infection, while flu is a mild illness and is not as threatening among elderly individuals as well as those suffering from chronic diseases, one should be aware that the infection does not respect distinctions of race, sex, age, profession or nationality and is not even constrained by geographic boundaries.

This last, among others, will be highlighted in the upcoming activities of the council after it renewed partnership with vaccine manufacturing giant Sanofi Pasteur with more than 60 years experience in the development of flu vaccines, in a ceremony held today (the country's only manufacturer of cell culture-based flu vaccine) in Los Baños, Laguna.

The advocacy partnership called Influenza is Flu at is Preventive Educational against the real threats which has been running for almost a decade, has been established to further increase the level of awareness of the public as well as the country's healthcare providers on the seriousness of the and practicality of vaccinations and the benefits of vaccination.

"We are now in the process of integrating a nationwide information drive using updated educational materials, which we plan to distribute in schools and other public places. Expect better variations as well as immunization programs to intelligent patients," the doctor informed.

## Best way

While hygiene measures such as washing hands, covering the mouth as one coughs or sneezes and isolating sick individuals could help prevent the spread of the disease, vaccination is still regarded as the best way to help prevent flu and its complications, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

But while flu is often passed off as something that is not a threat among healthy or young individuals, experts increasingly warn as one of the main spreaders of the disease, particularly within households and the community.

Since they could play a key role in the transmission, particularly if they are to constant contact with older adults or at-risk individuals (those with heart conditions, asthma and other lung conditions, diabetes, kidney problems or impaired immunity), this measure will also advocate vaccination among the healthy and young individuals.

## Spreads quickly

Magpili reminded about how quickly flu could be spread from person to person, primarily when the infected individual coughs or sneezes. The risk for contracting the infection when one is in a crowded or confined space. Coughing or sneezing discharges tiny particles containing flu virus into the air and surfaces in the environment. And there is a huge chance that these pathogens could be inhaled or be rubbed on accidentally in one's mouth, nose or eyes.

But while the flu is transmitted very like the common cold, its symptoms are different and may come on quite suddenly.

This is why everyone in the household is reminded to be on the lookout for the sudden development of productive coughing, sore throat, chills and chicken, and changes in color, fever as well as development of pleuritic chest pains (a type of pain in chest that is not a result of a heart condition so called because it is often a sharp pain that gets more when breathing deeply or coughing).

## Bedridden

The development of more serious health problems is always a possibility for those bedridden for days and weeks. While complications like pneumonia (since infections) and bronchitis are also serious, one should watch out for pneumonia.

A very serious complication of flu, pneumonia could clog the air sacs of the lungs, which would therefore make it difficult to breath. If the clogging spreads throughout the lungs, the body will soon be deprived of the much-needed oxygen and afterward, cause organ failure.

While a course of expensive antibiotics usually stops such bacterial infection, pneumonia would be avoided by not letting the flu to get worse in the first place.

A positive note to add is that there is vaccine also against pneumococcal infections such as pneumonia which can be given together with the flu vaccine (learn more about flu and pneumococcal infections, log on to www.infoinc.ph or for any questions about influenza and pneumonia.

# Phasing out a gold standard

TWO WEEKS ago, hypertension experts and heart specialists from the Philippine Heart Association and Philippine Society of Hypertension met to come up with some guidelines for medical practitioners to ensure a smooth phasing out of the mercury sphygmomanometer (MSM) that was banned since time immemorial to determine an individual's blood pressure or BP. No one can dispute that up to now, it remains the gold standard in measuring the BP.

A complete phasing out is mandated by the Department of Health (DOH) administrative order (AO) in all healthcare facilities. This is because of the potential risk of mercury poisoning just to save the sphygmomanometer's aching looks or bones.

We hope the DOH would reconsider its AO on the sphygmomanometer phasing-out. Although the practicality and convenience of using the more user-friendly digital BP devices are well accepted, we have also seen on the real, alarming studies that we had done that these devices are accurate only with BP levels between 80/50 mm Hg and 180/110 mm Hg. Sure, most would have BP levels within this range, and in fact we recommend these devices for self-monitoring of the BP by hypertensive patients at home. But there are still quite a number with BPs at, then less low, as in patients in a state of shock, or too high as in patients with hypertensive urgency or emergency. If the mercury sphygmomanometer is completely phased out, what will we use in these high-risk patients? We would be doing them a great disservice.

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## Never scientifically sound

Besides, it's never scientifically sound to phase out a gold standard before we can find its very-to-one-like the risk of mercury poisoning, but we still need it in special cases like the emergency room, intensive care unit and operating room. We need them to monitor the BP of those with markedly high or shocky BP levels which are beyond the capability of present-day digital BP devices to discriminate accurately. In the management of mercury poisoning from the sphygmomanometer—which, incidentally is very, very low compared to poisoning from mercury thermometers—we may be compromising the lives of those with abnormally high or low BPs because of inaccurate BP readings.

Although the fear for mercury poisoning is well-founded, we may be looking up the wrong tree. The mercury sphygmomanometer is only a very minor source for this type of poisoning. There are other more likely sources of mercury poisoning such as fluorescent bulbs, paint, dental amalgams and even some cosmetics. Rather than order for a complete phasing out of the sphygmomanometer, we can just reschedule healthcare personnel on how to check if these sphygmomanometer devices have leaks, and how to dispose of the mercury safely in the very rare event of a leak.

In the PSH-PHA consensus meeting, Dr. Reynaldo Ilon, chair of the PHA Council of Hypertension, moderated the discussion which had well-respected clinical toxicologists explaining to the group the serious and potentially life-threatening complications of mercury poisoning. Dr. Irma Makalinao, a professor at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine shared her clinical experiences on children presenting with serious but nonspecific findings which could mimic diseases like meningitis or even dengue fever.

Mercury poisoning can develop over a long period of time and may not manifest early such that it may not be obviously apparent immediately. Dr. Makalinao explained. The neurological toxicity manifestations could also lead to permanent and irreversible damage, such as what happened to a student at the St. Andrew's School in Makati, where the school had to be closed for four months to ensure complete clearance of the mercury vapors from the area where the spill occurred.

## Irresponsible disposal

Dr. Wenceslao Raz, another clinical toxicologist from the St. Luke's Medical Center, reinforced the warnings of Dr. Makalinao and deplored the irresponsible disposal of hospital wastes in some hospitals particularly in the provinces. Some hospital waste disposal sites contain mercury. He judged a video clearly showing the rupture coming from spilled mercury. "This is not seen by the naked eye and could only be seen with special lighting techniques," he explained. Children may unwittingly play with spilled mercury not realizing they are already inhaling the toxic vapors, he also added.

For her part, Anna Nieves, an expert from the National Center for Disease Prevention and Control, explained to the group that the DOH-NCDPC is studying the phasing out of mercury sphygmomanometers was aimed in 2009 by then Secretary Francisco Duque. It was done after consultation with specialists from the Philippine Heart Center.

Although the doctors committed to comply with the AO, there was agreement that the time period allotted for the phaseout is quite short. "In other countries, it took them five to seven years to implement the phaseout," said Dr. Dennis James Torres, member of the PSH-PHA hypertension council.

We're hoping that Secretary Ona and his undersecretaries would review once more the AO and make some amendments allowing the use of the gold standard mercury sphygmomanometer in those with markedly abnormal BP levels, either in the severe hypertensive category or in the shocky level. A longer implementation period can also help for a smoother transition to the mercury-free BP measuring device. Let the gold standard stay on.

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## WASH OFFICER - Cotabato
UN Level: NO-2

**The Job:** Under the technical guidance of the WASH Specialist, the post is accountable for professional technical contribution to programme/operation design, planning, administration, monitoring and evaluation of WASH (water and hygiene) programme/project activities, data analysis and progress reporting, and coordination and collaboration with national counterparts including, in support of achievement of planned objectives of the work plan, aligned with country programme goals and strategy in Mindanao.

**The Task:**
- Ensure efficient and effective WASH programming, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation during emergency, early recovery and development phases
- Design and manage WASH programmes and budget documents for review by the supervisor;
- Maintain appropriate humanitarian coordination mechanisms, and assist the WASH in coordination of the WASH Cluster. Ensure appropriate coordination between all humanitarian partners as well as relevant authorities and local structures.
- Develop partnerships with key WASH agencies to promote increased access to water, sanitation and hygiene promotion programmes during emergency, early recovery and development phases.
- Promote technical cohesion to all WASH partners.

**This Profile:** This temporary assignment is until 31 December 2011 only. However, based on UNICEF's requirements the appointment may be extended. We are looking for candidates with the all qualifications:
- A University degree in one of the disciplines relevant to the following areas: Public Health, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Geology, Hydrology, Sanitation Engineering, or a field relevant to environmental/WASH related development assistance. Equivalent relevant work experience will be considered.
- Additional training in Health Education or Communication for Development Programme Communication, or equal.
- Three years or more work experience (two years of which are professional duties) work experience in the UN or other international development organization or national government and field work experience.
- Background/experience with Emergency preparedness and response and the WWS Cluster approach.
- Knowledge of a local dialect in Mindanao.

All of the posts require fluency in English and Filipino (both written and oral) and the ability to work in a multi-cultural environment. We invite the candidates who can promote the UNICEF Core values of diversity and integrity, and competencies. Applications should be submitted on or before **11 April 2011** and should include the P.H. Curriculum Vitae (CV) Comprehensive CV and all WASH-related Offices Form (download from http://www.unicef.org/about/jobs_Personal_History_Form.pdf) Please send your applications by e-mail only to: applications@unicef.org. UNICEF is a non-smoking environment. Women applicants are encouraged.

# IELTS
IELTS Examiners

We are looking for suitably qualified and experienced individuals to join our team of IELTS Examiners.

You will need:

- An undergraduate degree or a qualification which can be demonstrated to be equivalent to an undergraduate degree.
- A recognised qualification in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) or recognised equivalent as part of a recognised university award course.
- At least 3 years full time (or the equivalent part time) relevant TESOL teaching experience (minimum one year post-certificate level qualification). The majority of the teaching experience must relate to adult students (16 years and over).
- The required professional attributes and interpersonal skills.

In order to receive an application form and information on the Minimum Professional Requirements, please send your Curriculum Vitae for an initial assessment through **EMAIL** to the following email address:

**PHMM.applications@idp.com**

Or submit CV and expression of interest to the following address:

**IELTS Administrator**
**IDP Education Pty Ltd**
2nd Flr Pioneer House Makati
736 Pioneer de Roxas, Legaspi Village
Makati City 1229
Tel: 8162736 Fax: 8168876

Closing date for submission of completed application forms and enquiries is by:

**22 April 2011**

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**C/MATES (45)* 2ND ENGRS(45)***

*) Legal limit)
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PLEASE VISIT OR SEND CV TO
the Seamil Bldg. #10 Corner San Andres/#1 Old Pitac Sts. Malate, Manila
(Across Andrew's Manila Water Church)
**CAPT. RONALDO S. MARASIGAN-Owner's Rep.**
Email: ronald@seateam.com / ronald@centrans.com.ph

Beware of illegal recruiters! No fees to be collected! For interested seeking only!

Economic Enterprise Council
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

## INVITATION TO BID

The Province of Cebu, through the Economic Enterprise Council, wishes to invite all interested persons/entities to submit a proposal for an Integrated Abattoir Complex Facility to be constructed in a Provincial Government Owned Property.

All particulars relative to the Screening, Bid Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of applicable laws.

The schedule of activities is as follows:

| Activities | Schedule |
|---|---|
| 1. Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) | March 28 - April 15, 2011 |
| 2. Issuance of Eligibility Documents & Terms of Reference | April 18 - April 29, 2011 |
| 3. Pre-Qualification Conference | May 4, 2011 |
| 4. Submission of Eligibility Documents | May 9-10, 2011 |
| 5. Notice to Pre-Qualified Bidders | May 16, 2011 |
| 6. Pre-bidding Conference | May 23, 2011 |
| 7. Receipt and Opening of Bids | June 21, 2011 |

Prospective bidders shall be furnished by the Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) with the Terms of Reference (TOR) and other pertinent documents to facilitate preparation of bids upon payment of the non-refundable amount of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) to the Cash Receipts Division, Provincial Treasurer's Office.

The Province of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids. It also reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect or informality thereof, declare a failure of bidding or refuse to award the contract.

(Sgd.) **GWENDOLYN F. GARCIA**
Provincial Governor

FOR SALE OR LEASE:
**The Columbia Tower**
**Units 141,142,182**
Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills,
Mandaluyong City
For more information:
Please call Anna at Tel. No. 403-2742;
or e-mail cybelean_properties@yahoo.com



Republic of the Philippines
**SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM**

## NOTICE

| NAME OF EMPLOYER | LAST KNOWN ADDRESS | NAME OF SSS EMPLOYER | DATE OF EMPLOYMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Cadiz-Lopez Memorial Hospital | Rizal Street, Cadiz City | ANGELINA A. SALAMAT | October 1, 2010 |
| 2. Jennifer Dela Cruz | Unknown | ANGELINA A. SALAMAT | October 1, 2010 |
| 3. Lilia Tabuenca | Unknown | FELIX L. ANDAMAM | July 2, 2010 |
| 4. Rosa Mendoza | Unknown | ROBERTO A. DAGAMI | July 15, 2010 |
| 5. Elsie Mesa | Unknown | CLAUDIA S. BOLOS | October 16, 2010 |
| 6. Joseph Lopez | Unknown | JUDY T. SALAS | July 16, 2010 |
| 7. Mariano Bernardo Cruz | Unknown | TERRY DELGADO | January 17, 2011 |
| 8. Rosa Fernandez | Unknown | HELEN CUBILLO | August 2, 2010 |
| 9. Lolita Dela Cruz | Unknown | ANGELINA A. SALAMAT | October 16, 2010 |
| 10. Lydia Gonzales | Bulacan | ROBERTO A. DAGAMI | January 1, 2010 |
| 11. Rosa A. Garcia | Rizal, San Jose | LEONILA S. GARCIA | August 16, 2010 |
| 12. Edna R. Lopez | Unknown | CORAL A. LOPEZ | January 2, 2010 |
| 13. Ernesto Garcia | 123 F. Garcia St. Cadiz City | MARIA MAGDALENA LOPEZ | May 16, 2010 |
| 14. Maria Magdalena Lopez | Unknown | JUDY T. SALAMAT | December 31, 2010 |
| 15. Lucelle Mendez | Unknown | LORENZO I. MENDOZA | July 2, 2010 |
| 16. Mr. Susan Lopez | 201 Gomez Apt. Mr. Tiffany Lopez Rizal | ROBERTO A. DAGAMI | October 16, 2010 |
| 17. Rolando Garcia | Rizal, Garcia Subdivision | LORENZO I. MENDOZA | May 5, 2010 |
| 18. Lyn Gonzales | Unknown | JUAN ROMEO A. GARCIA | January 7, 2010 |
| 19. Jocelyn L. Rosal | Quezon City | LEONILA S. BORRAS | February 16, 2010 |
| 20. Cpl. Cesar Dela Cruz | P.O. Address Cadiz City | FERNANDO T. SALAS | May 16, 2010 |
| 21. Lucy Abella | Unknown | CARLOS MARTIN | February 16, 2010 |
| 22. Susana Cristina Delgado | Unknown | ROLANDO L. SANTIANA | February 16, 2010 |
| 23. Cesario A. Cristina | Unknown | ELIZABETH C. TOLENTINO | December 31, 2010 |
| 24. Roberto A. Rosario | Unknown | RODRIGO S. TORRES | January 16, 2010 |
| 25. Maria Jose Tuason | Unknown | ROLANDO L. SANTIANA | January 16, 2010 |
| 26. Lucio C. Tirona | Bulacan | CARLOS MARTIN | February 16, 2010 |
| 27. Rosa C. Villanueva | Rizal St. Subdivision Cadiz City | ELIZABETH C. TOLENTINO | December 31, 2010 |
| 28. Maria Victoria | Unknown | ROLANDO L. SANTIANA | December 31, 2010 |
| 29. Roberto Ramos | Unknown | ROBERTO A. DAGAMI | July 16, 2010 |

(SSS Agency Office)

For jobseekers, log on to: **www.jobmarketonline.com**

## First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Lumban, Laguna
Tel. Nos. (049) 501-4678 / 0908 - 501-4280
Telefax 501-4678 E-mail Address: flec_1979@yahoo.com

## INVITATION TO BID

The First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc., with office address at Brgy. Linark, Lumban, Laguna, invites all qualified bidders / security agencies to bid for its security services requirement.

All interested parties can secure bid documents from PBAC Secretariat starting April 4, 2011 after payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 1,500.00). Submission of sealed bids will be on April 13, 2011 (Friday), at 2:00 P.M., at FLECO Main Office, Brgy. Linark, Lumban, Laguna, wherein bids will be opened in the presence of bidders or its authorized representatives.

BID BOND in either in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to two and one-half per cent (2.5%) of the total bid price. Bidder who submits bid bond less than the required amount will be automatically disqualified in participate in the bidding. Likewise, bids/proposals submitted beyond the specified date and time will not be accepted.

FLECO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPTS BIDS ONLY DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) **EMELIN C. IGNANIGAL**
PBAC CHAIRMAN

Noted by:

(Sgd.) **EVANGELITO E. ESTACIO**
PGM/ ING GENERAL MANAGER

## IMMEDIATE HIRING

**PLUMBER**
- Must be a Sanitary Engineer
- Has supervising 3 civil related experience in a big construction company
- Has the capacity to handling at least 10 workers

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**
- Female, at least 5'3" up, experience working in a law firm
- Graduate of any course
- Computer literate and have efficient business communications
- Adept in English and Filipino

**ELECTRICAL ENGINEER**
- Licensed
- 5 years working & minimum 4 years experience in construction and related engineering field
- Can supervise and coordinate with workers

**ORDER TAKER**
- Female or Male, with pleasing personality
- Preferable can speak mandarin fluently
- Minimum age 25 up
- With 2-3 yrs. experience working in a fine dining restaurant

***Send complete bio-data, qualified applicants only***

***Only qualified applicants will be notified***

Interested applicants may send their resume at Hap Chan Eatery, Hap Chan Bldg., Aguinaldo Hiway, Dasmariñas, Cavite, Philippines

## TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

2005 Hyundai Starex CRD 2.5L Manual Automatic 4WD/4X4 Engine, as low as 10K Down Payment, Call 0918-08 or 0908-6

Brand New 10 Wheeler Isuzu 6HK1 Engine, 6M/T Engine, as low as 10K Down Payment, Call 0918-08 or 0908-6

## TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

Rent Cars Isuzu Alfa 500 MT/AT

Rent Cars Hyundai Starex 2007-2011 / 2005 Automatic / Manual Trans

Rent Cars Toyota Hi-Ace 2007-2011 / 2005 Automatic / Manual Trans

Rent Cars Ford Escape 2007-2011 / 2005 Automatic / Manual Trans

## GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

## PUBLIC NOTICES

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

## REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

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Area 2 & 3 BY Sta Lucia Realty
ARRA FEE Total package
Call 7-24 for Schedule of Visit

## REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

## INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## LEGAL NOTICE

*I am home in heaven, dear ones. Oh, so happy and so bright!*
*I felt a hand and touched God, woke up in His glory...*
*I am now at peace forever, safely home in heaven!*

**We remember with deep love and affection**

# Engr. Francisco "Panching" M. Tan Gana

**of the City of Biñan, Laguna**

**on his 100th birthday, April 2, 2011**

We, his family, request you to join us in prayer for "Tatay Panching"... so dearly loved... so fondly remembered... so truly missed... as we know he continues to pray for each one of us.

Holy Masses will be offered in the following churches:

| | |
|---|---|
| Family Mausoleum - Eternal Memorial Gardens, San Antonio, City of Biñan | 7:00 PM |
| San Isidro Labrador Parish - Poblacion, City of Biñan | 6:00 PM |
| San Vicente Ferrer Parish - San Vicente, City of Biñan | 6:00 PM |
| San Antonio de Padua Parish - San Antonio, City of Biñan | 6:00 PM |
| Nuestra Señora Virgen Del Santo Rosario De Orani - Orani, Bataan | 5:30 AM |
| St. Jerome Emiliani and Sto. Sesana Parish - Alabang Town Center, Muntinlupa City | 6:00 AM |
| Sto. Sepulcro Parish - Landayan, San Pedro, Laguna | 6:00 AM |
| Blessed Sacrament Parish - South City Homes City of Biñan | 6:00 AM |
| San Pedro Apostol Parish - Malaban, City of Biñan | 6:00 AM |
| Nuestra Señora De la Paz - De la Paz, City of Biñan | 6:00 AM |
| Parish of the Risen Lord - Southville Subdivision, City of Biñan | 6:00 AM |
| Sta. Rosa De Lima Parish - Kanluran, Sta. Rosa City | 6:00 AM |
| St. James the Great Parish - Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City | 6:20 AM |
| Redemptionist Church - Baclaran, Pasay City | 6:45 AM |
| Miraculous Medal Parish - Irrineville Subdivision, City of Biñan | 7:00 AM |
| National Shrine of the Sacred Heart - San Antonio Village, Makati City | 5:00 PM |
| Chair of St. Peter Parish - Balibago, Sta. Rosa City | 6:00 PM |
| St. John Bosco Church and Center for Young Workers - Laguna Technopark, Sta. Rosa City | 6:30 PM |
| San Francisco de Asis Church - San Francisco, City of Biñan | 7:00 PM |
| St. Joseph Parish Church - Cockeysville, Maryland, U.S.A. | 4:00 PM |

# CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

**Invitation to Bid for CY 2011 Basic Education Facilities Fund**
**– Red and Black Zone – Cluster 1 – 6**

1. The Department of Education – Sta. Cruz Schools Division Office now invites bids for the CONSTRUCTION OF TWO (2) STOREY, FOUR (4) CLASSROOMS WITH TOILET AND OTHER FACILITIES (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) at Pagsawitan Integrated School, Pagsawitan, Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

| Item No. | Name of Project | Name of Project Description | ABC PHP | Contract Duration |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classrooms with Toilet and Other Facilities (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) | Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classrooms with Toilet and Other Facilities (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) | 2,500,000.00 | 120 calendar days |
| 2 | Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classrooms with Toilet and Other Facilities (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) | Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classrooms with Toilet and Other Facilities (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) | 2,500,000.00 | 120 calendar days |
| 3 | Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classrooms with Toilet and Other Facilities (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) | Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classrooms with Toilet and Other Facilities (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) | 2,500,000.00 | 120 calendar days |
| 4 | Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classrooms with Toilet and Other Facilities (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) | Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classrooms with Toilet and Other Facilities (Phase 1 – Foundation and Ground Floor Slab) | 2,500,000.00 | 120 calendar days |

2. The Department of Education – Sta. Cruz Schools Division Office now invites bids for the above Construction Projects. Bidding is open to all duly licensed Filipino and foreign contractors as may be allowed by the Philippine Government under its Guidelines on Foreign Participation in Government Projects, and is governed by Republic Act (R.A.) 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures, in accordance with all said laws and their IRR, using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria as specified in the Bidding Documents.

4. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/nationals, corporations, partnerships or associations wholly owned and controlled by Filipino citizens/nationals, and cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperative Development Authority.

5. Prospective bidders may obtain further information from the Schools Division Office and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be acquired by interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).

7. The Department of Education – Sta. Cruz Schools Division will host a Pre-Bid Conference on April 7, 2011 (Thursday) at 10:00 AM at the Division Conference Room, Sta. Cruz, Laguna, which shall be open to prospective bidders.

8. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before April 21, 2011 (Thursday) at 10:00 AM. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stipulated in the Bidding Documents.

9. Bid opening shall be on April 21, 2011 (Thursday) at 10:00 AM at the Division Conference Room, Sta. Cruz, Laguna. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend. Late bids shall not be accepted.

10. The Department of Education – Sta. Cruz Schools Division reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award in accordance with Section 41 of R.A. 9184 and its IRR, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

11. For further information, please refer to:

Engr. Rodolfo C. Mendoza
Chief, Physical Facilities Division
Department of Education – Sta. Cruz Schools Division
Sta. Cruz, Laguna
Tel. No. (049) 524-1674

Approved by:

(Sgd.) DR. ANTONIO M. ORENSE
Schools Division Superintendent

(PNS – April 2, 2011)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF LA UNION
City of San Fernando

**BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE**

## INVITATION TO BID

The Provincial Government of La Union, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Project : | **OFFICE, COMPUTER AND JANITORIAL SUPPLIES** |
| Location : | Provincial Government of La Union |
| Brief Description : | For one lot various offices including District Hospitals and LLHC |
| Approved Budget : | |
| For the CONTRACT : | OFFICE SUPPLIES = P 1,981,181.05 |
| | COMPUTER SUPPLIES = P 1,407,188.30 |
| | JANITORIAL SUPPLIES = P 1,110,794.20 |
| | = P 498,903.05 (LLHC) |
| Contract Duration : | 120 calendar days |
| Delivery Period : | May 2011 |

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years, with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation, Post-qualification, Post-qualification, Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

| | As to Action | Schedule |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Issuance of Bid Documents | March 31, 2011/ April 18, 2011 at the BAC Office, Provincial Capitol, City of San Fernando, La Union |
| 2. | Pre-Bid Conference | April 8, 2011, 1:30 p.m. BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, City of San Fernando, La Union |
| 3. | Opening of Bids | April 18, 2011, 9:00 a.m., BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, City of San Fernando, La Union |
| 4. | Bid Evaluation | April 20, 2011 |
| 5. | Post-qualification | April 25, 2011 |
| 6. | Notice of Award | April 26, 2011 |

Bid Documents will be available upon payment of a non-refundable amount of: for Office Supplies = P1,181.05; Office Supplies for LLHC=P1,500.00; Computer Supplies = P2,500.00 and Janitorial Supplies = P2,500.00; Janitorial Supplies for LLHC = P2,000.00 to the Provincial Treasurer's Cashier.

The Provincial Government of La Union assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **DR. GEOFFREY S. TULAN**
BAC Chairman

(PNS – April 2, 2011)

**WANTED TO BUY**

Wheel Metal Duct Fabrication Machines
- Bead and tie guard machines
- 1 set, 4ft G.I/S/S manual bender 1.2 mm
- 1 set, 4ft G.I/S/S manual shearer 1.2mm
- 1 set, 4ft G.I/S/S manual shearer 1.2 mm
- 1 set, hose fastener 1 inches 1.2 mm
- 1 set, manual seamer machine
- 2 units of x-ray cutter machine

Contact Person: Ms. Rita Carlos
Tel No. 4270870 Fax No. 4270869
Email add: sandy33_carlos@yahoo.com.ph

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**Mary Angela Somes Fahy**

*Just her very young life is a tragic cut accident on March 31, 2011 in Concepcion, Tarlac.*

*She will be deeply missed by her parents Patrick and Phoebe, her sisters Krissa, Clara, and Andi, grandmothers, aunts, uncles and cousins.*

*Funeral Mass will be celebrated at St. Clement's Church via Pan Baño City 11 a.m. Saturday, April 2, 2011*

*Interment will be at Forest Lake Memorial Gardens Mandaluyong, Manila City*

*In lieu of flowers, please offer mass for the eternal repose of the soul of ANGELA.*

**More Classifieds on page**

DepEd Division of Sorsogon **A19**

# BUSINESS

## PLDT CORPORATE BUSINESS GROUP CO-PRESENTED THE 5TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ICT AWARDS -PHILIPPINES 2011

PLDT Corporate Business Group co-hosted, headed by its SVP & Head of Customer Sales & Marketing Group Ernesto Eric Alberto ( 3rd from right ), recently supported the well-attended 5th Annual International ICT Awards at the Grand Ballroom of Dusit Thani Hotel, Makati City.

The 5th Annual International ICT Awards - Philippines 2011, an event jointly organized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines ( CanCham) and the Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP),recognized the very best and brightest of an industry that is creating high-value jobs; generating rapid economic growth; and most importantly, showcasing the best qualities of the Filipino to the world.

Shown in top photo from left to right: PLDT VP & Head of Corporate Business Group Joey Hernandez; Tim Orcutt, Commissioner Manchito Nadem; ICT Int'l Awards Chairman Richard Mix ; BPAP President Oscar Santos; American Chamber ICT Director Don Pulbaum; IBM Global Processing Services Philippine Delivery Leader Cassandra Solo; Cognizant Philippines Country Manager Sreejit Chandran; First Call Information Solutions Group CEO James Donavan; IPR Global CEO Akuile Pawelin Tolapatiamanyo; Asia Pacific President David Rizza; Genpact Philippines Country Manager Danilo Sebastian Reyes; Hewlett-Packard Asia Pacific (Hong Kong) LTD Director of Philippine Center Emmanuel Mendoza; PLDT AVP & Head of New Business Development Precy Kwingua; Eric Alberto; PLDT VP & Head of Corporate Relationship Management Joy Laggansas and Thomson Reuters Manila Site Officer Raoul Ten.

# BSP fears wage hike effect

By Michelle V. Ramos

A WAGE hike of more than P20 a day could mean prices of goods and services to increase faster than imagined, the central bank said.

According to the Manila Central Bank, increasing the daily wage by more than P20 could cause demand for goods and services to rise significantly more than the growth in supply, thus causing the inflation rate to exceed the ceiling set for this year.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said that according to the latest estimates by the central bank, inflation could be anywhere between 4 and 5 percent this year, still within the official range.

The government wants to limit the increase in consumer prices to 5 percent this year and next year.

However, Guinigundo said the estimate was based on the assumption that daily wages would rise by P10.

Therefore, any increase higher than P10 a day this year could cause inflation to breach the 5-percent ceiling.

"We have to do a review of the inflation forecast. Forecast should worry us by more than that [P10]," Guinigundo said.

Labor groups are demanding wage hikes ranging from P75 to P150 a day, citing the increase in prices of oil and other basic commodities and services.

Rising oil prices are blamed largely on the political tensions in the Middle East and North Africa, which are oil-producing regions.

However, economists said that wage hikes should be commensurate with an increase in productivity of workers. They said that if wages rise faster than production, then demand for goods and services would grow faster than the rise in supply. If this happens, they said, then prices of goods and services, and thus standard of living, would increase even more.

Meanwhile, the BSP said it would use means to deliberately causing the peso to rise just to temper inflationary pressures.

Guinigundo said the central bank's exchange rate policy stays the same—that is, to allow the market to determine the exchange rate, and to intervene only in cases of significant pressures that could cause a sharp and sudden volatility of the peso.

"We do not deliberately attempt to manage the exchange rate just so inflation would be managed as well," he said.

The monetary official noted that deliberate action on an affected difficult by the peso's movement, and so the BSP cannot implement a policy that will cause either a strong or a weak peso.

# OFW savings, investments down in Q1

SAVINGS and investments of Overseas Filipino Workers dipped in the first quarter as higher prices of goods forced their families here to spend more on consumption.

According to the survey by the Manila Bristol of Filipinos in the first two weeks of March, the savings index for households that rely on remittances sent home by OFWs stood at +41.6 percent.

This was lower than the +43.7 percent recorded in the fourth quarter and the +58.4 percent registered in the first quarter of last year.

The index is computed as the percentage of respondents that saved a portion of their money for savings less the percentage of respondents that did not save.

The latest index indicated that OFW households that saved some of their money still outnumbered those who did not save, nonetheless, the number of households that did save had dropped.

On the other hand, the investments index settled at +15.7 percent in the first quarter, lower than the +3.6 percent recorded in the fourth quarter and first quarter of last year.

"Respondents nationwide anticipated an increase in their expenditures on all types of basic goods and services considering their expectations of a continued rise in fuel prices," the BSP said.

Rising oil prices can be traced to tensions in countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

"The public should be pacified and assured that this [price movement] is brought about by external factors," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

Guinigundo added that without these external factors, increases in the food prices of basic goods would have been lower.

The government expects inflation this year to range from 3 to 5 percent.

The BSP admitted, however, that given recent developments, inflation could go beyond 5 percent in some months, although the full-year average could still be within the target. —Michelle V. Ramos


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Lito Cosa D. Pangilinan

# PROPERTY

# Federal Land builds tallest hotel in PH

By Emman Cora

AT THE heart of the expansive and bustling Bonifacio Global City in Taguig will soon rise a giant structure groomed to be the tallest hotel and mixed-use building in the country upon its completion.

In its first venture in the hotel industry in Metro Manila, real-estate giant Federal Land Inc. takes the property scene a notch higher by building the Grand Hyatt Hotel.

Rising on a 30-hectare prime land, the brand Hyatt hotel promises to be the first and only premium-category hotel in the country that will further enhance the cosmopolitan reputation of The Fort's central business district.

At 60-stories high and being 300,000 square meters above ground, the 488-room Grand Hyatt Hotel will be comparable to the iconic structures of modern countries like the United States and Japan and cities like Shanghai, Hong Kong and Taipei.

## Dream project

For the record, there's no stopping the real estate giant from building its dream project. Four years after it has initially announced plans of construction, the company has resumed work on its flagship project with the global brand Hyatt.

In a recent media briefing, Federal Land officials said the first six floors of the main skyscraper will house the hotel podium and ballrooms while commercial offices will occupy the eighth to 30th floors. The upper floors in the penthouse levels, meanwhile, will house luxury suites and other hotel amenities. Several units will also be available for residential and commercial lease.

Federal Land president Alfred Ty said the company will invest as much as ₱30 million for this flagship project that will stir the second on the tallest hotel structure in the country. The Grand Hyatt Hotel is set to be completed in 2014 while the rest of the 14-hectare complex will be developed progressively, Ty said.

Posts another ordinary business hotel, the Grand Hyatt Hotel will offer world-class hospitality service with the signature elements of the brand Hyatt: dramatic and energetic lobby environments, innovative dining options, spa and fitness centers, state-of-the-art technology as well as comprehensive business and meeting facilities.

## Assured quality service

The brand Hyatt is already an assurance of its long standing quality and hospitality service, according to Federal Land officials. Hyatt manages, franchises, owns and develops the Hyatt-branded hotels, resorts and residential and vacation ownership properties around the world. As of December last year, the company's worldwide portfolio consists of 453 properties.

Designed by renowned architectural firm of Wong & Ouyang HK, with Casas Architects and Aitken Tittle Ong Arup as the structural designers, the Grand Hyatt will help position the Philippines as a destination for a 5-star accommodation facility. Officials revealed that the building is targeting a LEED Gold-ership in Energy and Environmental Design certification from the Green Building Council. In essence, it will maximize its eco-friendly operation and find ways to conserve energy as part of its contribution to the green movement.

"It gives us comfort that the designer is a British firm that has already built projects around the world," Ty added.

The hotel is perfectly situated at the business district surrounded by the bustling business community and commercial structures like shopping malls, schools and parks. The strategic location also offers scenic viewpoints and skylines of the Makati financial district.

Ty revealed that the global financial crisis put the rollout plan on hold in 2007 "but the country was able to survive pretty well and the potential is so great." Cool Brook of Hyatt Financial International related that the potential was so huge that in Hong Kong alone, Hyatt district were pegged at 22 million last year.

Ty furthered that the rewarding of The Grand Hyatt Hotel is sure to help boost the Philippines' image and add prestige to its business environment that is currently experiencing robust growth.

"Its completion will likewise serve as a clear manifestation of investors' confidence in the country, specifically in the tourism and finance aspects. This confidence also reinforces the country's positioning as a haven for safety and security. The development will also provide quality jobs to a significant number of qualified Filipinos," he said.

Federal Land is the property development arm of the Metrobank Group of Companies. The company's current portfolio includes high-rise luxury residences such as The Grand Midori Makati, Sky Garden Club and Residences, The Residences and Two Residences in UrDaj, as well as other premier condominium projects around the metro. Riverview Mansion and Fort Bonifacio Riviera in Rosario, The Oriental Place in Makati, and The Capitol Towers in Quezon City. It also operates the Shore Ortiz Hotel in Cebu.

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# Green, disaster-resistant affordable housing

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

*Amanda de Jesus*

THE DEVASTATION has hardly changed. First, the triple tectonic storms. Powerful typhoons strike the country. Then emergency relief operations are put in place, managing victims and relief goods in makeshift temporary shelters. After the storm, an assessment of the devastation follows, showing many lives lost with the destruction of countless homes of the urban poor, especially those along riverbanks, creeks and coastal areas.

Then the reconstruction of communities follows with the same substandard shelters rebuilt in the same flood-prone areas. Everyone goes about their normal lives until the next rainy season comes and the whole cycle starts all over again.

This time however, typhoons are stronger, more frequent and more unpredictable not just in our country but all over the world. This is caused by climate change.

## Int'l design competition

To help change this cycle generated by indifference and the "business-as-usual attitude" behind the sad plight of the urban poor in the Philippines, an international design competition was launched in March 2010 called "Design Against the Elements."

The aim of the competition is to design homes and communities that can resist the Philippines' strongest typhoons and let the residents to be able to survive for extended periods in punishment conditions.

The competition is a brainchild of Illac Diaz, executive director of the Multicher Foundation, in collaboration with Ann Miguel Properties Inc., the United Architects of the Philippines, the Ultimate Change Commission and the Quezon City government led by Mayor Herbert Bautista.

The competition received entries from 139 architectural firms from over 30 countries, including the Philippines and was judged recently by experts from the United States, United Kingdom, France, New Zealand, Sweden, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Architect Johannes Peter Goldsjoe of Denmark advocates ecoffective housing strategy by providing shelters made up of housing enclaves within a courtyard. It also forms the framework of a local community where people meet and help each other.

The enclaves are made up of different housing units which can be stacked in many different ways. This system contributes to different semi-private and semi-public outdoor areas with terraces and small gardens.

Structural steel is combined with bamboo for the floor, walls and roofs. All the buildings are oriented in avoid facing the primary wind direction. This minimizes wind pressure on the building. Building layouts are staggered in relation to each other thus creating clear wind pressure.

Housing units are placed on the upper part of the sloping site and are raised on columns with a minimum height of 12 inches from the ground.

A canal system absorbs water from roads and courtyards and channels water to a main water collection basin.

Roads and courtyards are permeable materials not only to drain water rainwater but also to prevent damage due to flooding and fast flowing streams.

Rainwater is collected from roofs leading to a tank. When full, waters will flow down a canal drainage system into a water collection basin.

## Winning designs

In the professional category first prize, Ateneo de San Miguel, Juliana Ferre Gelabert (Germany); second prize, Samuel John Williams (England); Special Award—Energy, Rodrick Pati (Italy) and Special Award—Green Design, Susanth Sachidanandy (India).

In the students/graduate category first prize, Duc Thanh Bui (Vietnam); second prize, Martin Schorn (Austria). Special Award—Energy Kunz Michelle Gil (USA) and Special Award—Green Design, Stefan Berlow Hahn (Germany).

THE WINNING DESIGN, called The House of San Miguel, uses structural steel in combination with bamboo for the floor, walls and roofs. All the buildings are oriented to avoid facing the primary wind direction. This minimizes wind pressure on the building. Building layouts are staggered in relation to each other thus creating clear wind pressure on the building.



THE ENCLAVES are made up of different housing units which can be stacked in many different ways. This system contributes to different semi-private and semi-public outdoor areas with terraces and small gardens.

Some cities abroad have adopted a multipurpose use of public areas. These spaces may also be used as temporary shelter for disaster victims. Built on high ground, these roofed areas could be used as flea market or sports grounds on weekends, and as car pools on weekdays.

This would be very helpful in congested Metro Manila with over 10 million inhabitants. The National Capital Region, the smallest region in land area with only 620 square kilometers, contains 11 percent of the nation's total population. This confirms the magnet to attraction of the city and the need for more forward planning. We could very well start identifying other public areas for mixed use including temporary shelter for disaster victims.

*For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadedejesus@gmail.com*

# Manhattan Garden City named a sustainable proje

Manhattan Garden City was identified as one of Megaworld Corporation's sustainable township projects during the 1st Sustainable Building Technology Conference held on November 11-12 at the SMX Convention Center.

According to Megaworld's Sustainability consultant, Edmond Macasio, township developments like Manhattan Garden City are the perfect models for sustainable land use planning. Compact townships promote "densification and sprawl" and transportation connectivity. Residents are encouraged to walk from the home to the mall or office.

Manhattan Garden City, located at the Araneta Center, offers an abundance of public transport options from buses, taxis to train lines. It is the only point in the metro where the LRT2 and MRT3 train lines converge, thus making any point of the metro from the north, south, east and west accessible within minutes.

Since the urban enclave will encourage residents to live, work, play and shop within the community, they are forecast to consume less electricity and water, buy a lesser quantity of items and discard less trash and spend far less time in automobiles. With the train lines as an option for transport, they will significantly contribute to lessening greenhouse gas emissions, according to Macasio.

Manhattan Garden City is a joint venture project between the Araneta Group and Megaworld, the country's #1 developer of residential condominiums for the mid- and upper-income market.

"The green aspect of Manhattan Garden City also makes it a sustainable project. 65% of the total land area is dedicated to greeneries. Sky gardens at the upper four floors of every tower of our new phase, Manhattan Heights, will give residents a refreshing option to unwind high up the metro's confines," Megaworld Central Properties Inc. President Anthony Charlemagne Yu declared.

More than 20 different amenities - such as a lap pool and kiddie pool, skylights and jogging paths - line arrested tropical landscaping at the fourth floor podium level of Manhattan Garden City. The podium level also hosts a 125-meter walkway through which residents can reach the other phases as well as the train stations via Gateway Mall for LRT2 and Farmer's Plaza for the MRT line.

"Township living in a special place like Manhattan Garden City points the way to a sustainable future. You can live, work, shop and play here everyday of your life with the entire family," Yu concluded.

To inspect the benefits of living at Manhattan Garden City, please call 810-3333 or visit the showroom at the 3rd level of Gateway Mall.

Residents will enjoy the live-work-play-shop lifestyle on offer at Manhattan Garden City.

Manhattan Garden City is one of the township projects of Megaworld Corporation that promote sustainability.

Manhattan Garden City is the only transit-oriented development that is linked to both LRT2 and MRT3 train lines.

# Nothing but water

IS IT really summer already? Unexpected to last year's scorching heat, this dry season comes on to be quite shy. It's already the month of April but we haven't had the hot, sunning summer of last year just yet. We've even been experiencing some rain. I wish the sun came out a bit more. Sigh.

Over at where we live, it's still a cool 22 degrees in the mornings, and we get a gentle breeze—one which we'll get in December—in the early evenings. It doesn't feel like summer at all. But I'm not really complaining. The children don't ask to switch on the airconditioner since it's cool enough to be with only a fan running throughout the day. Windows—one to each large window and to our roof insulation which is normally used for cold storage facilities. It really keeps the heat out!).

At work, we've just ran the additional air-conditioning unit we installed a few months back in anticipation of another burning summer. I hope though that this strange, unpredictable weather gives us a window to enjoy the season's rituals: the beach, barbecues and the occasional weekend vegging-out, family style, in an air-conditioned room.

## Near-perfect antidote

In the coming summer, we often forget about water's power as the near-perfect antidote to arresting the heat. The presence of water once in on the inside, working in from the outside of our bodies. When we sweat, the moisture lifting from our bodies cools our skin. This is the process of evaporative cooling. It is the same process used when sponging down someone with fever....using water and the process of evaporation to cool the skin surface and help bring the body's core temperature down. It's the same cooling effect we get as we step out of (elsewhere) or the pool.

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

*Isabel Berenguer Asuncion*

It works the same way with your garden: at surrounding pond: when you have water instead of a hard surface, heat is absorbed and not deflected back into the air and moved around your spaces. Hard gardens have become popular for the same reason, and all the more because they need no maintenance, by making the spaces unwelcoming and by preventing the deflection of heat back into the environment. That's why places with swimming pools, water features or large gardens seem habitat and is essentially not useful) are usually cooler than if they didn't have them.

But there's another side to water nature's power of suggestion. The sight of water shimmering under the sun or the mere sound of it running can have a cooling effect on the mind and thus the body. The melting of moving water creates "white noise" which can be interpreted as being the sound of anything, or of even being "soundless." Hearing the sound of water, and letting it wash over your psyche is a way of letting go of bothersome thoughts. It lets off steam both literally and figuratively. That's why cascades, ponds and other water features have never lost their popularity in our tropical climate, they give psychological relief when physical relief is not possible.

## More enjoyable way

That's of course, the most enjoyable way to stave off the summer heat is still to immerse yourself in water. Last year's punishing El Niño made me contemplate on building a plunge pool in our backyard! If what we were experiencing were the effects of global warming, then we had to be prepared for the many scorching summers to come! But I heard the cost—then at around? worth my trouble, and it would drain half of my garden where as I preferred to keep my unbroken green "carpet" intact.

Alternatively, we bought an above-ground, round, four-meter pool from SM, and every summer, my sister-in-law, maintains and chemically treat it like a real pool. It's a good compromise. I get to keep my garden and we don't have to spend unnecessarily on electricity nor on chemicals. We we have our share of backyard summer fun. But the best use of it will really come when the bursting heat arrives like clockwork—it will let me swallow the best scrap. Nothing beats water.

Contact the author through dotpub-mission@pub.ph or through our discussion forum at Berenguer Facebook account.

# Safety new attraction of new development

THE 2.4-HECTARE low-density resort-themed community called Amara offers homebuyers an alternative option from what is common in most developments in Metro Manila.

AMAYA'S units are much spacious and easier to configure.

By Charles E. Baker

Most NEW developments may boast of the finest amenities, sprawling, open spaces. Some even put these to use. This new project in Paranaque City, however, offers one more: a safer environment for its residents, especially children.

"The layout of the Amaya may be described as school type, a more homey design where the common areas like play grounds, swimming pool, jogging path and social areas are separate or away from vehicular traffic. The design was a protective wall. This way children and other members of the household will be able to go from their unit to their common areas without the danger of being hit or inconvenienced by passing vehicles," explained John P. Reyes, CEO, SOL Land Development Corp., a subsidiary of publicly-listed holding company, Stock Clinic Resources Inc.

At SOL Land's first project, Reyes said they decided to make Amaya affordable but at the same time very affordable to their primary target market: middle-income homebuyers.

Several multi-tower, mid-rise condominiums will rise all over the length of a 2.4-hectare property located over-looking the service road of SLEX (South Luzon Expressway) in Barangay Bel (about one kilometer away from the Sucat interchange).

Amaya will feature tudor-style 14- and 30-floor wooden mid towers, a thoughtful mix of several amenities which supports the conclusion to low density Bian plans observed as one goes up the building.

"But while this condominium development will offer almost 3,000 units, we ensured that 80 percent or 1.87 hectares of the property is devoted to open spaces, where landscaped gardens, recreational and multi-purpose area will be located. For this particular project, we would rather have us but high-ly relaxed and satisfied homebuyers. We want to impress the market that by the reasonable price we are offering them, they would be able to enjoy privileges only higher priced developments provide," Reyes explained, adding that the generous 80 percent open space provision is way above the industry average of 50 percent and the mandatory 30 percent.

Unit prices start at P1.2 million (studio), which is equivalent to P15,000 per sq m (a unit of similar size would be priced P75,000 per sq m in Bonifacio Ave.). Most expensive unit—a 2-bedroom...would cost around P2.5 million.

SOL Land informs that straight payment for Amaya is also available at zero percent interest for as low as P7,500 a month.

As most Filipinos continue to savor Metro Manila for value-for-money homes, they would find Amaya (Tagalog word for 'a new beginning') a very attractive choice," described Alexander Jason Jamisola, general manager, SOL Land.

He said the site has been carefully master planned in collaboration with some of the most renowned architects and engineers in the country to maximize the natural contours, trees and ground to the overall well-being of its residents.

"We want to give our future homeowners an enjoyable and convenient lifestyle. Amaya will be free using a city lounge located at the road dock to provide another option for relaxation space while further inspiring camaraderie among residents, while a business center at every building will cater to the needs of the professionals on the go," Jamisola said.

According to Justice Jose Abenado, VP SOL Land, Amaya's vision is to be a home to every sense of the word. "The unit configuration allows freedom and healthful community living. With a square configuration, residents have more options on how to optimize interior space as well as enjoy better ventilation. Moreover, compared to most condo buildings where laundry area is usually placed at the roof deck, we have decided that here at Amaya, that area should be located within the unit. Very unique, indeed."

# Where Life is at its Greenest

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**Acqua** features **The Pebble**, a modern-day Country Club by the Water, where delight and excitement stem from a myriad of sports, wellness and recreational activities. **The Riverwalk Promenade**, a shopping and dining haven, will be located at The Pebble's ground floor, accentuated even further by the soothing sound and visual drama of three magnificent waterfalls that seemingly flow into the river below.

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www.acqua.com.ph

FUCHSIA pique shirt, Folded & Hung green jacket, Prymark white racerback tank, W.W.W. at SM Department Store

## Green minded

A play of textures keeps layering interesting.

### Shop directory

**Bueneasilie**, 3/F Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati
**Charles & Keith**, 2/F, Greenbelt 5, Ayala Center, Makati City
**Folded & Hung**, 2/F, Glorietta 5, Ayala Center, Makati City
**Forever 21**, 3/F, Gateway Mall Bldg. A, Araneta Center, Pasay
**Kiss Pandesma**, 3/F, SM Mega Mall Bldg. B, Ortigas Center, Pasay
**The Ramp**, 2/F, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati City
**Shoto & Fifth**, www.shoeandfifth.multiply.com
**Parisa**, 6/F, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City
**Prymark**, G/F, Greenbelt 5, Ayala Center, Makati
**Rustan's**, Ayala Center, Makati City
**SM Department Store**, Ayala Center, Makati City
**Topshop**, 2/F, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati City

# Block party

Say a loud and bright hello to summer in these piled-on, electrifying hues

## Leg room

While leg creases are a big no for this season,

PURPLE sweater, Kiss Pandesma; blue wide-leg pants, The Ramp; turquoise pendant necklace, Parisa; orange snakeskin print platform pumps, Charles & Keith

## Knit-pick

Yellow silk tank top, Topshop; orange knitted sweater, and black cutout shirt, both from Forever 21; tan clogs, Sam Edelman at Rustan's

## It's a cinch

Mask this trend easily by adding a bold belt.

MAGENTA puff-sleeved dress, The Ramp; multicolored bead necklace, Accessorize; aqua leatherette belt, W.W.W. at SM Department Store

## Very berry

Mix berry hues for a look that's both sultry and sweet.

RED body-con dress, Parisa; & White pink peonies pendant, Kiss Pandesma; purple belt, W.W.W. at SM Department Store; blue platform pumps, Charles & Keith

Young brands collaborate for social awareness

# For the greater good

**Text and photos by Mikaela Bandayan**
*Correspondent*

What? The Greener Good x Stylebreak Collaboration, "Young Still, Silly Full"
When? Feb. 18, Wednesday
Where? Bonsagi by 8 Boutiques, G/F Unit 105A, The Podium Mall
Why? The Greener Good collaborates with Stylebreak. The young independent brands address the need for change, campaigning for greater social awareness for the environment, and animal welfare. Young social elites gathered in the name of fashion, to address "the call that needs to be heard."






SAM Gadrinab (center) with friends

BROTHERS Christian and Miko Concepcion

SISTERS Pauline and Pamela Prieto

LAUREEN Uy and Raymund Quilantang

# Sneakers and jeans forever

By Luis Carlo San Juan

One can never get enough of these staples. Check out these fun versions that can make you stand out in a crowd

## A little graphic

Graphic shirts are the walking canvases, something you can wear for a long time and less out of the people who are advocates of anything outrage a grab. Gonzalez Tigers has collaborated with Japanese-inspired Hirosaki brand Mishiko's.

**"HAPPIE"** statement tee and low-rise regular-cut distressed jeans, Zara; Bikkembergh top sneakers by Gonzalez Tigers

## Just the basics

What's so cool about a basic tee and skinny jeans? It's effortless, but the look doesn't have to be the every-day shirts, accessorize with playful watches.

**BASIC** French tee, Zara; skinny jeans, Folded & Hung; Converse sneakers, $65 from SM Department Store

**STATEMENT** tee, Zara; blue skinny jeggings, Gonzalez Tigers; California 78 vintage sneakers

## Go sporty

Whatever said jeggings are just for girls? A pair would look cool on a guy as well; the soft cotton fabric is comfortable in the summer heat. Finish off with some cool sneakers for a sporty urban look.

## Earth tones

Another color palette that never goes out of style are the earth tones—browns and olive greens. Go go with coco-colored blue jeans for a little adventurous and not-too-much, some of jeans, but it takes a bit of character to pull this one off.

**OLIVE** green tank top and blue carrot fit jeans, Topman; brown leather high-cuts, Converse, available at SM Department Store

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**STRIPED** shirt, Zara; vintage black shirt jeans, Topman; bright orange classic sneaks, Vans

## Color pop

Neons is in again, or have it ever gone? Don't be scared to mix a pair that stands a bit of color. Mix it with basics like dark denims and subtle stripes—what you call coloring with crayons.

ADIDAS Harden ST sneaks

## 2bU recommends:

Can't get enough? Check out these stuff

ADIDAS regular vintage blue denim

CONVERSE Superman graphic sneaks

## More McDonald's Treats for Free with Metrobank Credit Cards

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QICCING runner-up team Mists from (l) Leigh Wong, Charmian Molina and Angela Arandiara, with L'Oreal Philippines Professional Products general manager Charissa Hernandez (leftmost) and team mentor Mitos Fabio (second from right)

FIRST runner-up team CARGO from UP Ateneo Barrio's Bara Ginobis and Carla Sia, with mentor Raymund Arabara (left team) and L'Oreal Philippines' human resources director Tina Angeli (rightmost)

LIONEAL Breakthrough 2011 Philippine National Champion team Extreme from DLSU: John Kenlin Uy, Maria Elisa Velasco and Pamela Ervita, with mentor Aster Bustillo (second from left)

# La Sallites' extreme idea –on men's shaving–wins

By Vanessa B. Hidalgo

It's not just in UAAP that we get to see top universities compete.

It also happens when the country's brightest from Ateneo, La Salle and the University of the Philippines gather in a Boardroom, where they try to outdo and out-think each other.

Team Extreme from De La Salle University, composed of Pixie Rizal, Elise Velasco and Justin Uy, rocked the night as they emerged champions and won an all-expense-paid trip to Paris, where they will compete against 41 countries. They were guided by Aster Bustillo.

"We wanted our group exercise because it is our convictions to push the limits and go beyond what is expected," Ervita says. Team Extreme also won the award for best communications campaign.

LOréal held the LOréal Breakthrough competition Philippines' first National Finals last March 17; it is now on its third season.

LOréal invites college students in their final two years to act as marketing brand managers for an existing LOréal brand, and create a new product line and overall communications campaign for it.

This year's chosen brand was LOréal Professionnel Homme, a range of hair care and styling products designed to meet the specific needs of men's hair.

Team Extreme's winning "blow-me!" product was a salon service called Shower, a universal solution for shaving.

Standing out among other products, particularly hair straighteners, shampoos and hair remedies, Shower offers closer solutions for shaving after-effects, such as razor wounds and scars.

### The winning product

And since LOréal's Boardroom theme was to "go beyond" current brand thinking, Team Extreme aimed to make Shower like a brand that would go beyond the shaving norm.

Shower has three elements, each designed to

## University students bag top award in beauty competition

further soften the hair removal technology they have created.

The first phase is the epidermal relaxant, where a protective layer is placed on the skin.

Next is the hair removal mask.

And finally, the post-treatment tonic is applied. The tonic also prevents hair from growing back abruptly.

Afterwards, Shower offers the "Premium effect"—a post procedure that promises five distinct solutions: no hair growth, no acne, no wrinkle, and moisturized skin. The result is a clean, close-to look for men.

Team Extreme also created a spa-

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# Life after school

Sarah

Vicky

DEAR Undecided Graduate2011,

I have some questions for you.

1. Do you have a clear concept of what you want to do in terms of your career?

2. Are there any existing work opportunities and are they beneficial to you?

3. Is there an immediate need to support yourself financially?

4. Are you the type of person who thrives in environment?

If you answered "yes" to most of these questions—go. By apply!

If you answered "no" to most of these questions—I say take a break.

But if you do take a break, this is your homework:

1. Set out a concrete, doable plan, financially and in any case, Divide those four categories into two columns: personal and career. List your goals in each field: things you would like to accomplish in that amount of time, in that region of your life. Keep this chart somewhere you can see it.

Make it as big (or handy) or colorful (or simple) as you want. Know that your priorities will probably change along the way and that's okay; it's called "evolving."

2. Get to work. Mentally, read anything you can get your hands on—books, newspapers, magazines, fun, chaos, summits, and quotes. Spiritually: meditate, pray, meditate acts of kindness, give back to your community somehow. Emotionally: do-up. Invest souls and invest forward—put boundaries, address issues, forgiveness, healing.

Physically—at the very least: 30 minutes to an hour of activity that makes you sweat per day with a commitment to getting "only the good stuff" in your system.

3. Find opportunities to student [illegible]. Take those Japanese lessons you've always wanted. Climb Mount Pulag. Write a song.

4. Find a mentor. Ask them questions. If you don't have one immediately available to you, pick someone you admire and research on their success story, their philosophy in life and figure out how to align yourself with that process.

5. Don't go crazy (yet). Do not get sucked into becoming a couch potato. Stay sharp by keeping mobile, seeing your city, and interacting with people face-to-face. Meet new people who are good influences.

Commit to all of this, and the first day all your friends have jobs won't even matter, because the job YOU have at hand is your responsibility to YOUR-SELF—to create the best opportunities you can for YOUR journey ahead.

Stay moving forward and up ward.

And remember ... believe in dreams.

Love,

—V

DEAR Undecided Graduate 2011,

In life, there really is no emergency all answers. I'm sitting here wondering how to work you through this. I look back at my own experiences and remember reading a beautiful quote by author Robin Sharma: it says, "Run your own race."

It means to stick to your own path, treat your own pace and don't compare what you do to what someone else does. When it comes to this decision, as long as you have a vision for yourself, stick with it.

On one hand, work offers invaluable real-life experience. You never know what you could learn in your first job that can lead you to the next job and the one after that. I know life is connected to an invisible string of events.

On the other hand, taking a break to reflect, to travel, to think about certain life questions is good for you, too. A lot of people have new experiences outside of school, which lead them to their true purpose. You never know what could happen around the corner.

Take time to go over your decisions, but make sure you let go of fear. A lot of people today are in the "rat race," trying to outdo each other. But the question is, for what? There is no point trying to compete with someone, when you are clueless for something else. If you decide to work, don't show up unmotivated and only because you're afraid to be left behind.

Put your full heart into whatever you create. Let it inspire you, not stalemate you. If you love what you're doing then it's not really called "work", is it?

Love,

—V

# La Sallites' extreme...

From page D1

ball—an armadillo. "It will serve as their protection against unwanted hair," Sebastian says.

"When none use the armadillo in the salon, they'll know that Nirvana is available for them," Ivana adds.

Runaheroes encourages students to dream, excel and succeed together. It emphasizes the need to work together as a team and to turn wild ideas into products. This competition—now on its 10th edition worldwide—challenges students to go beyond what is impossible.

"This is a culmination of an entire season, a celebration of talent and individualism," says Michael Wenceslao, retail manager for L'Oréal Philippines. "We encourage them to go all the way to the top."

## An adventure for students

Tina Amyel, human resource director for L'Oréal, describes this competition as a two-fold adventure for students. "They learn to operate an international manager and they have fun at the same time," she explains. "We'd like to reach them that without teamwork, it's no game work."

For the L'Oréal team, Runaheroes is a way to infuse new blood into the highly-competitive world of beauty and fashion.

"They have fresh perspectives, we want them to discover another angle to explore another way to be creative," Amyel adds.

Teams presented their imagined products to a jury panelled by L'Oréal Philippines' managing director Luc-Olivier Marquet, L'Oréal human resource director Tina Amyel, L'Oréal Philippines' general manager for Professional Products Christie Fernandez, McCann Erickson Philippines' managing director Randy Villar and Elite Asia president and CEO Evelyn Rivera-Cruz.

It was a closed-door competition last March 16 at Greenbelt Plaza, Galleria, where all teams presented their innovative campaigns.

"Believe in yourself," says Team Extreme's Oz, who is taking up advertising management. He explained that it was the most important lesson he has learned after working intensely for six months on this product.

His teammate, Ivana, is taking up applied economics and advertising management, while Sebas is into marketing management.

Andrei Revilla, who's been coaching at DLSU for seven years, described the win as "encouraging."

ASPHALTE team Abraham Samuel de Garcia, Gino Bea Marangan and Horacio Cabrera

TEAM Extreme's Patricia Evana, Jaime Austria Qi and Maria Elise Nebre

JEANNE Hamdullie wears a look by Mich Dulce.

HOT your usual fashion editorial

# Design talk

Ayala Museum brings you "Design Talks Everywhere We Roam" on April 30, 3 p.m., at Ayala Museum Ground Floor Lobby. It is a lecture series that brings prominent and pioneering Filipino creative professionals to the center stage.

The works of the creative duo behind Everywhere We Shoot, Ryan Vergara and Gaston Caramello, will also be on display. They both trained at the De La Salle College of St. Benilde's School of Design & Arts (Ryan was a Multimedia Arts major, while Gaston was in Fashion Design and Merchandising).

Their work has appeared in almost every major magazine in the country and publications abroad. They've been commissioned to work on brand campaigns, record sleeves, and backdrops for top Filipino designers.

They've established an immediate style of art through photography, fashion, and graphic design that seamlessly trains and playlist and always with a ton of humor.

*Ayala Museum is located at Makati Avenue corner De la Rosa Street, Greenbelt Park, Makati City.*

PORTRAIT of Oriana Cadness

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Learn photography and creative design from everywhere we shoot

# Bieberfever burns in 3D

By Angelica Y. Yang
Student contributor
Immaculate Conception Academy

'Never Say Never' is more than just about the swishing hair—it's about believing in your dream and pursuing it.

JUSTIN BIEBER is the epitome of dreams made manifest through sheer perseverance and faith. This is the take-away from Bieber's inspiring story in his movie, "Never Say Never," the premiere of which I watched in the company of bloody loyal Bieber fans last March 22 at SM Megamall.

Who would have known that the singing sensation had uploaded on YouTube would result him in pop stardom? "This shows that social networking is really powerful," says one of his concert crewmembers. Bieber already pops on Twitter or online to promote himself for radio guestings or mini-concerts.

In spite all his achievements, however, Bieber has held onto his values. At 15-year-old Bieber has Michelle Abigan told me, "He doesn't sing about money, fame, or sex just as well, and he remains down-to-earth. He's one of the few remaining singers with true talent and firm beliefs."

"Justin Bieber's music is sexy," said another fellow fan at the premiere. "He is very talented and gives us motivation," gushed another. And he's extremely sexy, too, on the 3D screen. When he swished his hair (in slow-mo), everyone in the movie house screamed—because he looked so cute!

AUTHOR'S SIGNS: left, Bieber bookmark

### Regular boy

Justin Bieber was a regular boy who had friends, played basketball and soccer, and went to school in his hometown in Ontario, Canada.

At the start of the film, he sings "With You" with Chris Brown in a YouTube video clip. Soon enough, the video clip got lots of hits—and Bieber became a worldwide phenomenon.

Many girls who were interviewed in the movie have become such die-hard Bieber fans they know not only the day he was born, but the time, as well. That would be March 1, 1994 at 12:56 a.m., in case you didn't know yet!

His baby gestures come flashing next, and they are so adorable! He plays with a small bongo drum in one of his first videos. Did you know that he also loves playing the trumpet, keyboards, guitar and violin?

Many may not know also that he played jazz, and he wanted to become a drummer. He once put up a benefit concert to get himself a set of drums. And just as added trivia, Bieber could actually solve a Rubik's Cube in one and a half minutes, is he smart.

While in Toronto, Canada, he joined the "Stratford Idol" singing contest (his mother Pattie Mallette and Chaz were if he didn't win, it would have been okay since he had an opening anyway. Bieber won second place; he was just 13 then.

That was when he gave up his normal life. He performed in various schools across America. He'd get on the tour bus with his lindsay books and read through them while in transit from one city to the next. He still valued his studies, even as he was busy nurturing his fledgling career.

By then, he already had a musical coach, whom he fondly referred to as "Mama Jan." During one vocal training session, he is seen in the movie singing with his mouth, photo in the bathroom, practicing for his upcoming concert.

There's a really touching scene in the concert where a girl plays the cookie in front of Avon Theater, and Bieber goes up to her and praises her. When she asks if he is really Justin Bieber and he says yes, the girl is flabbergasted. "Just kidding your dreams, okay?" Bieber tells her.

It turns out that Avon Theater was the very same place where Bieber played the guitar when he was just 12.

### Floored

His manager Scooter Braun, who discovered him on YouTube, asks him and his family to go to Atlanta. When Bieber arrives, he is totally floored to see his idol Usher at the door! Usher, at first, thinks he is Bieber's little cousin. Bieber asks if he can sing one of Usher's songs, after which it is Usher's turn to be floored. "Who is this kid?" he exclaims.

His concert at Madison Square Garden was sold out. Usher's performance there confirmed that he had finally arrived. Still, he kept his feet on the ground. He made people happy in his hometown Ontario by giving free tickets to those who couldn't afford to go to his concerts.

And he continued with the "tradition" of picking out a random girl in his concert performances, and making that girl the "One Less Lonely Girl" by dancing to one of his hit songs in his "My Worlds" album. His singe her a song and gives her a bouquet of flowers.

Bieber has had his share of challenges on the way to the top. Just before his performance at Madison Square Garden, he developed not only a sore throat, but lumps in his vocal chords, and couldn't sing.

Mama Jan advised him to postpone the show. "But I don't want to let all the kids down," reasons Bieber, determined to make his fans happy and give his best. He wouldn't give up. And he pulled through just fine.

"I was just watching TV in my room, and now here I am living my dream and doing what I love," says Bieber as scenes of his concert at Madison Square Garden flicker on the television screen.

"There's gonna be a time in your life when people say you can't live your dreams. Just never say never!" Bieber exclaims to his fans as he sings with all his heart and smiles them.

Bieber's movie is all about believing in your dreams and going for them. It's not just a singing phenomenon; he's an endearing role model for teenagers looking for their own little place in the sun.

THE AUTHOR poses with a pubic Bieber cutout.

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# You are not *alone*

'You'll never know if a stranger or a passerby in someone who is incredibly lonely. One smile could change his/her entire day'

By Hannah Pelayo
Student correspondent, De La Salle Santiago Zobel School

A FEW DAYS ago, I woke up drained from the previous night's events. I went through my usual morning routine: breakfast, bathing, brushing my teeth, choosing my clothes and heading to school.

I remember it as a blur of hope, no food, a bit of inspiration, but I could not think of anything. I could not even find an animal-shaped cloud in the sky, when usually I find dragons and lost castles every time I look up.

I stepped out of my car still hopeful. Despite my lack of creativity, I was hopeful that it would still be an eventful day.

### Blank face

I walked down the corridor with a blank face, staring at anything and everything in front of me. A man passed by, perhaps in his 30s, dressed like a father. He held a little bag under his arm, and wore a pair of black glasses.

As soon as he turned in my direction, he turned his gaze to the ground.

I speedfully remember this, because at that time, I looked the other way, as well.

At that moment, with our heads turned away, as soon as we were out of sight of each other, I realized something.

He was a stranger to me. He was nothing but a passerby. I didn't extend a "hello," or even a kind, friendly gesture.

And from the way he acted, it seemed like I simply was the same to me.

I realized the rest of my day with my head held high, with more thoughts of recent occurrences moving through my mind. I had other thoughts and ideas. I continued to search for answers to some questions.

"The event" finally triggered my sources of inspiration; and just like that, I had something to ponder the entire day.

As Filipinos, we grow up, learning about our cultures, our ways and our society. When we are young, we are taught proper etiquette and the proper ways of doing things.

When we grow older, we learn even more about our culture, through our history and the changes that have happened over time.

*We are taught that Filipinos* are hospitable, friendly, and open to change. Filipinos are also very kind, to the point that strangers are considered friends and worthy of assistance.

We are brought up to respect others, whether or not we know them personally. This is proven by the concept of "*pagmamano*" in the Filipino culture where neighbors, friends and even strangers unite each other in moving their homes elsewhere, by working together to carry the house to the designated area.

It just goes to show that, whether or not a person is a stranger, a friend, a lover, or a family member, he or she deserves our attention.

### Equal value as a person

Everyone is made equal; therefore every person's value is equal. It depends on each person, then, whether or not he or she will value another person less or more than others.

But a person's value should never be based on the value given by the people around them, but by the value they give themselves.

You can never be idolized by a person if you cannot look up to yourself. Who would believe in someone who doubts himself?

Everyone is in need of affection and attention. No matter how much love that person has, there is always room for more.

You'll never know if a stranger or a passerby is someone who is incredibly lonely, and in need of positivity. Perhaps, one smile could change his entire day.

His day could start horribly, but you can be the encouragement he needs or plant the acknowledgement, or a simple "hello."

*There are many things you could do.* Everything begins with a greeting, and ends with a goodbye. You could change an entire day, an entire outlook, and even an entire life with just a tiny act of kindness to one stranger.

Do you feel the tender of a stranger's loving touch warmth in your heart? It's like a tap on the shoulder, a small reminder, and reassurance that not everyone in this world is unkind or mean.

You are not alone, so keep your head held high as all times, and think positively. Take the time to smile, wave, and receive a friendly hello to a person nearby; it could be a stranger, a friend, a family member. Do it to as many people as possible.

Remember that life is short. Take every opportunity to make as many friends as you can, and to brighten as many days as you can.

Learn to be more open and friendly. Bring back the tradition of Filipino hospitality by beginning with yourself.

# Super *strips* on the Web

By Martha Gonzaga
Contributor

IT'S AMAZING how we can endure so long until for hours in front of the computer. The World Wide Web has not just proven itself to be an effective communication tool; it has also become the entertainment package for all ages.

Modernism say that e-books (electronic books) are more practical times-saving analysis and ink books. Not only are e-books convenient to bring anywhere, but they're easier to share with friends, with a short click and a little file transfer. Besides, from an environmentalist's point of view, e-books mean less paper, and that will save more trees, right?

Nevertheless, being in our generation means being more visual, and sometimes read something more than just plain text. This is where webcomics come in. Webcomics are just traditional comic strips, cartoons expressing thoughts and feelings with different kinds of speech bubbles, but this time, using the World Wide Web as a medium. Simply put, webcomics are cartoon strips that are published and distributed on a website.

To the comic book fans out there, this might be the answer to your prayers, as there will be no need to guess what is on that comic book you've wanted to purchase for the longest time. With some research, you can find the comic previews and decide if it's worth your money.

There are tons of webcomic genres. Some could be just random, one-window types with a hilarious punch line, or a series, making the reader anxious about when the next update will be. Webcomics range from witty to funny, to downright gory, and there are webcomics that fit your style, despite the kinds and any mood.

The webcomic options are endless, and once you follow and really read a series, you are bound to be hooked (just like most of that webcomic's website), or you might never come across it again, to your total dismay).

It doesn't really matter if you are reading a webcomic about zombies, or a full-blown Doomsdapped 3D image burning with colors. What matters is that you are engaged, you keep reading, and you are genuinely amused.

### Highly recommended

Here are some webcomics that might catch your fancy:

"Questionable Content" by Jeph Jacques (www.questionablecontent.net)

An honest, funny, weird yet wise webcomic. It is seemingly about nonsense, indie rock, little robots and the problems that people have with that, this series becomes a practical guide on daily living. Updates five days a week, Monday through Friday.

"Hanna is Not A Boy's Name" by Tessa Blaine (www.hannaisnotaboysname.com)

The art of this webcomic series is superb, sometimes minimalist, sometimes expressive, but it has an overall theme, and the premise is that of a carefree, talkative tomboy investigator named Hanna who travels a mysterious setting (who may or may not be what he looks like because he can talk and think—he just doesn't know who he is yet). Update schedule of this series is slightly erratic, because it is a virtue.

"Freak Angels" by Warren Ellis and Paul Duffield (www.freakangels.com)

This webcomic is the answer to any dystopia, an interesting post-apocalyptic premise, great art and an amazing cast of characters. Readers of this webcomic have to be slightly mature and not squeamish, as there are episodes that are highly graphic. Updates regularly on pages every Friday.

"Octopus Pie" by Meredith Gran (www.octopuspie.com)

A slice-of-life webcomic with very clean, smooth, sometimes graceful and slightly sparkly art. This series is about two women living in Brooklyn, New York, and their jobs, social circles and problems. This series can go, and in very odd directions, with a magical realist style, but mostly, it is very realistic and charming. Updates weekly.

"The Secret Knots" by Jean Gatsopoulos (www.thesecretknots.com)

The imagery is beautiful. This webcomic does not have one solid, ongoing story all throughout, unlike the last four episodes or so—one shot, but there are story arcs lasting five episodes or more. The dialogue and the imagery just go well together, resonating with a kind of sad, quiet, yet hopeful aura. Update schedule is inconsistent, which is okay, given that every panel is a short gesture and a work of art.

WOW! Pagsanjan, "Hannah is not a Boy's Name" and "Freak Angels"

Super LifeStyle
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# Rooming with Leighton Meester

By J. I. Cuenca
Contributor

**The star of TV's 'Gossip Girl' takes her first movie lead role in a new suspense thriller**

ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATED director Christine E. Christiansen ("Blizzom") crafts a finely tuned tale of madness and role reversal in "The Roommate." It is packed with ingenious twists and heart-stopping surprises as Sara (Minka Kelly), a naïve college freshman, begins to suspect that her roommate, Rebecca (Meester), is not what she seems to be.

"Leighton was the first person we cast for this movie," says Christiansen. "And she is a fantastic actress. The role of Rebecca requires an actress who can go from normal to insane to very bitchy in no time. Leighton did a lot of research for the role, trying to figure out what kind of person she would be."

**Rooming ideas**

Meester signed on after reading an early draft of the script and speaking to Christiansen at length about the movie by sources in studio. "We were so open to everything," she says. "It was really fun to watch the process of developing it. Everybody was bouncing ideas off one another."

The edgy and tenacious Christiansen's earlier films won her rave reviews. "She is a real unruly mastermind," says Meester. "Christine does what I think of as 'crisp' directing. He doesn't spell anything out. He just plants an idea in your head."

Meester, who has been a successful actress since her early teens, has never been through the roommate experience herself. "Being assigned the person you're going to live with for the next eight or nine months sounds a lot like a blind date," she says.

"It's strange to think that when you come to college, you have to live with someone you don't know at all. The idea is disconcerting, and a great jumping off point for this story. I think everyone will be scared and intrigued."

The role made tremendous demands on Meester, physically and emotionally. "It wasn't an easy movie to make, but it was always interesting," she says.

She delved into the character's psyche, developing a personal history for Rebecca and consulting with psychiatrists to learn more about what makes her tick.

"This is the story of the psychological deterioration of a human being who has several identity and is trying to appropriate another person's," she says. "The character has so much depth."

ROOMING 21

Sophie Dinge Kden Joshua Cada

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

## Where to Stop
## Where to Go

# An Easter escape at Sofitel

COMO XXIV at Sofitel Philippine Plaza from April 22 to 24 and get two complimentary tickets to Sofitel's fabulous Easter Egg Hunt on the 24th, plus access to Easter activities such as face painting, balloon twisting, and other games, gifts and surprises. Overnight accommodations for the month of April starts from P6,370++ inclusive of a sumptuous breakfast at Spiral for two.

Easter brunch at Spiral features eight varieties of live Oriental shucked pugos and sparkling wines, plus face painting and balloon twisting for kids. Rate is set at P3,400++ nett, valid from April 23 to 25. Enjoy a special Easter dinner with sea-view of Luneta charmed dishes that friends and loved ones are sure to enjoy. Rate is set at P2,288++ nett, valid from April 20 to 24. Get set for the much-awaited Easter Egg Hunt at Sofitel! Receive a complimentary ticket when you dine at Spiral from April 22 to 24 (dine per set) or chitmed tickets at a special ticket price of P500 each. On Saturday and Sunday mornings, bubbles abound at Manila's most colorful dozen of lasts: active brothers, Spiral. Feast on a smorgasbord of culinary treats from around the world with an unlimited fill of champagne and sparkling wine. Sunday brunch features over an champagne and sparkling wine brunch from Europe. Champagne aficionados can also indulge in Spiral's signature Champagne Sunday Brunch at P3,400++ nett. Luncheons at Spiral are made more exciting, as groups of five get Spiral brunch vouchers for the price of four. Call 551-5555 ext. 1999 to 1999, or e-mail at reservations@sofitelmanila.com.

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**THE GREAT MANILA POLO EASTER GETAWAY**

This Lenten Season, bring your entire family for a memorable Easter weekend at the Manila Polo Club (MPC), the only 5-star hotel in Cebu City. Relax in air-conditioned white cabanas by quality time with your loved ones as you revel within Great Easter Getaway package starting at P7,775++ (single/double room only) or P3,500++ (with breakfast) per person all inclusive. Explore Club Zone, complimentary use of the swimming pool and gym plus shuttle service to major shopping malls. The hotel also serves the way for families to observe the holy week traditions made more convenient with a guided tour and holiday exercises. Take part in the Visita Iglesia on Maundy Thursday (April 21) and visit seven of Cebu's most prominent churches that are Good Friday (April 22) pass the Way of the Cross and Holy Eucharist. Hearty, savory and perfect for a traditional Easter morning feast on Sunday (April 24) at Mango Polo. For reservations, call Cebu (032)232-1111 or Manila (02)886-1280.

**Mimosa View Park Hotel offers '4 in 4 Room Promo'**

A 5-minute and awe-exciting thrills await Baguio City lovers as Mimosa View Park Hotel rolls out the carpet and throws its doors open with the "4-in Rooms Promo." Stay in any of the luxurious suites at this famous boutique hotel for four days and three nights, and get another four-day, three night stay on your next visit. So absolutely nothing. Located along a quiet stretch of road, Mimosa View Park Hotel perches on a wooded slope that overlooks the famous valley of Benguet and the distant Cordillera mountains. Each of the well-appointed suites was to be enjoyed. The balconies open to panoramic views and mountain scenery. The rooms are equipped with spacious beds, handsome bathrooms, flat screen TVs, refrigerators and elegant furnishing. Double the fun and double the pleasure with Mimosa View Park Hotel's limited and unique "4-in Room Promo". For reservations, call the Baguio office at 424-1000, or (632) 6886000. Manila office hotline: (632)727-3065 to 69/local 120.

**ASTORIA PLAZA'S HOLY WEEK SPECIAL**

This Lent, Astoria Plaza is offering a very special room rate in all of its suites. Enjoy the most premium accommodations at its suites that consist of the largest in the metro. For only P9,100 nett, enjoy the hotel's spacious one bedroom suite and get one free massage from Hagonoy Spa or upgrade to a luxurious two bedroom suite for only P6,800 nett and get two complimentary massage from Hagonoy Spa. This will really give you the chance to relax and unwind from the daily hustle and bustle of city life. This very special package includes: buffet breakfast, free use of the pool, complimentary wi-fi and complimentary shuttle to select nearby destinations as indicated in the schedule. This promo is valid from April 18 to 24 only. For inquiries and reservations, please call (02) 7111, ext. 8082 - 8084. Astoria Plaza is managed with distinction by Genesis Hotels and Resorts.

# Lancaster Hotel Manila's 'Easter Eggstravaganza'

KIDS AND the young at heart will surely enjoy the "eggstra" special activities at Lancaster Hotel Manila's "Easter Eggstravaganza" on Sunday, April 24. From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., there will be a Magic Show, Egg and Face Painting, Film Showing, the traditional egg hunt and many more surprises at the hotel's EL Sky Lounge. Kids coming in their best Easter bonnet costume can even win a special prize.

Better yet, book a weekend and get another consecutive night for free with Lancaster Hotel Manila's "Lunes ng" promo. With rooms rates starting at P5,000 per night + a junior suite, this promo is inclusive of buffet breakfast for two, complimentary Internet connection, and complimentary shuttle service to Ortigas shopping malls.

Lancaster Hotel Manila is conveniently located at Shaw Blvd. in Mandaluyong City, a few hundred metres away from the busy intersection of Ortigas along Edsa. The modern hotel offers all-inclusive accommodations with its 145 hotel rooms, as well as the junior, executive, deluxe, and Lancaster suites. Each suite features a bevy of amenities.

Applicable to bookings on Friday to Monday for the rest of the year 2011, "Lunes ng" perfectly complements the delicious "Easter Eggstravaganza" Sunday. The special rate does not include 10% service charge and applicable government taxes. Prior reservation is required and subject to space availability.

Reserve now to get the discounted rate of P5,000 for the "Easter Eggstravaganza" of P575 per person, whether adult or child and is inclusive of buffet brunch and a host bag. For more information, call (632)521-1818, fax (632)521-1808, or log on to reservations@lancaster.com.ph or email reservations@lancasterhotels.com.ph.

Microtel Hotels · Resorts

### FIRE SAFETY GRAND SLAM FOR INTERCON MANILA

Intercontinental Manila again receives a grand slam on fire safety, most recently last 13th 2011 Fire Safety Compliance Awards Program of Makati City with two citations, topping these citations is the coveted award 5 Star Award of Distinction for Fire Safety Compliance. The highest of its category, this award is the seventh time an Intercontinental Manila for meeting all requirements of the Fire and Building Safety Code of the Philippines. For attentiveness and readiness to perform its best during fire emergencies, the hotel became involved the building fire drigade for the eighth consecutive year. The Corporate Fire Safety Award for consistent commend to fire protection and life safety for the sixth year in the "Special Award of Distinction for garnering all three aforementioned awards completed this Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay, Jr. during this awarding ceremony are InterContinental general manager Christian Privatier, chief engineer Alan Mendoza and chief of security Pete Ilhan.

### A sunny sporty summer at Makati Shangri-La

MAKATI SHANGRI-LA, Manila has prepared a summer plan for children and adults alike, where lessons on swimming, tennis for adults and surf lessons for the children, ballet, and tae kwon do are offered at this Health Club during April and May 2011. Discover a sport or talent while learning from certified experts. Participants can enjoy this summer and with offerings overarching lessons offered for all ages, for the comfort of the hotel's outdoor pool. Parents can sign up their little ones for the Aquatots swimming course for children aged 2½ 12 years old, a creative, non-technical approach in teaching essential swim skills to children using interactive games and engaging pool toys. Swim strokes are introduced, focusing on technique and efficiency based on the principles of total immersion - the world's leading authority in swimming instruction. Adults can learn to be graceful underwater with Aquadyn, a course on synchronized swimming, a performance sport done with music where swimmers move in synchronization and combine swimming, ballet and gymnastics. The Aquadyn swimming course is for adults, which uses the Total Immersion method to teach proper stroke techniques through a progression of drills. Children can learn the elegance and grace of ballet at an early age with lessons to be conducted by ballerina Jean Zamudio to kids aged five to eight years old, or practice the art of self-defense with tae kwon do to be taught by two-time Olympian Donnie Duaso offered to those from five years old up. Tennis lessons will also be taught for children and adults. Soft tennis is for young kids aged three to six years old, and will be conducted by Joyce Wong, the first licensed soft tennis instructor in the Philippines, while adults may learn tennis basics taught by the hotel's certified tennis instructors. Both ballet and tennis classes have two batches with eight sessions each, with the first batch starting on April 4, and the second batch on May 9. Enjoy an exciting summer vacation with loved ones over two lifestyle and ballet classes at the Health Club at Makati Shangri-La. For inquiries and reservations, call the Health Club at 8620381 to 8620 local 7388 or e-mail healthclub.shmla@shangri-la.com.

# Dusit Thani Manila's prelude to Easter

SUNDAYS JUST get more exciting at Dusit Thani Manila with 6 additional activities for kids as a prelude to the hotel's Easter Sunday event.

Kick starting of the Sunday Family Encounter brunch will definitely enjoy Egg Painting by Carpe Diem on April 3, Cookie Decorating by Sun Miguel Mills and Magnolia Gold Bunny on April 10 and the T-Shirt Painting on April 17, aside from the regular activities at the Kids Zone. The first 50 kids get to avail of these activities.

The Sunday Family Encounter Brunch allows guests to take pleasure in the massive display of culinary delights, live cooking stations and an abundant surpassing of refreshing drinks by evening over the 4 centers, namely - Basta, Bonjourno, Tosca and UMU and indulge in their cuisine. The Sunday brunch is priced at P1,600 net per person, and P800 net for kids age 6-12 years old. Kids 5 years and below are free.

And starting April 1, guests may purchase access tickets at the hotel's 'Dusit Wonderland', an Easter celebration event at the hotel's restaurant reservations desk. The events will be on April 24, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., to be held at the ground ballroom. Ticket price is P500 net which allows access to 1 kid and 1 accompanying adult. Extra adult is priced at P150.

For inquiries and reservations, call 230-8888.

# Summer and Lenten accommodation choices at Manila Pavilion

EXPERIENCE COMFORT and serenity during this time of the year as you veer away from the hustle and bustle of daily life, by indulging in Manila Pavilion's accommodation choices for this summer and Lenten season.

Delight your loved ones with an extended family vacation with 'Lenten Escapes' offered on April 17 to 24. Book two nights and get a complimentary stay on the third night inclusive of Easter eggs starting at P8,500 net. Alternatively, watch the breathtaking Aqua events like Cirque Mediterranee and Aqua Mundi Manila when you choose to book a room package with 'A Room With A View' until May 29, with rates starting at P4,400 net. Both room packages are replete with welcome drinks, international breakfast for two, and a Gourmet Box card.

Manila Pavilion makes room dreams a reality with 'Staycation Fantasy' room packages. Experience a world of serene seclusion with blissful room accommodations starting at P4,200 net, inclusive of breakfast and robes for one to Manila Ocean Park's swimsuit and fountain show 'Fantillion Fantasy' tourist-only packages start at P2,000 net. Both room packages are valid until June 30.

Manila Pavilion's accommodation choices profile, among others, cable TV, pay-per-view channels, NDD/IDD telephone access, wi-fi Internet connection, personal safe, and coffee and tea making facilities and amenities, and are valid for local residents and expats with ACR.

For booking details and reservations, call Manila Pavilion at 526-1212 extension 2335 to 2337 or toll free at: 1-800-10-9999-2VIP (9847487); or, visit www.manilapavilion.com.ph.

### Edsa Shangri-La's exclusive offers for PAL members

EDSA SHANGRI-LA, Manila presents room and dining exclusives for Philippine Airlines members to celebrate the nationalflag carrier's 70th anniversary. Members Club members who book the Best Available Rate for any room category with exclusive breakfast when they present their same-day boarding pass upon check-in. The double upgrade promotion may apply for guests who travel in any Philippine Airlines route. Concurrently, to celebrate for us Shangri-La's Indian food festival and Philippine dishes' 70th anniversary, the hotel will offer a "Seventh Grand Dines, Free" buffet promotion at level restaurant. For every group of seven, the seventh diner receives a complimentary breakfast, lunch or dinner buffet between March 26 to April 3. For more information and reservations, please contact a hotel professional or access the website at www.shangri-la.com.

### URATEX IN HOTEL SHOW PHILIPPINES 2011

With outstanding beds, mattresses and pillows' selection in broad range of products, Uratex, the country's leading foam and mattress brand, took part in the recent Hotel Show Philippines 2011 held at the ISAO Convention Center, Makati Manila, Philippines. From May 24. As the said exhibit, Uratex proudly displayed its hundreds of guests its outstanding products that can surely compete against some of the best foams and mattresses available anywhere in the world. Hotel Show Philippines is an annual exhibition that features the latest in international hotel, services apparatuses and goods, interior, exterior and design furniture, operating facilities and supplies and special amenities. Uratex booth is Uratex's 36 square meter booth that focused on its latest mattress product lineup and some of its best pillow products that continue to capture the attention of discriminating buyers from both local and foreign markets.

# Rooming with Leighton Meester

From page E1

At the start of the movie, Rebecca arrives like the ideal friend for Sara. "She's actually a good influence on her," says Silvestre. "Rebecca shows bars all around the city, not just the clubs and pastries. But she grossly misinterprets the relationship, which is the beginning of a lot of problems. So they get closer, before one starts to lose touch with reality."

**In her own words**

Mercure answered questions about her new project.

**This is a different role and a new challenge in your career.**

Yes, but I really wanted to get in to something different. It was definitely a learning experience for me.

**How do you see Rebecca, your character?**

I think she is desperate and not rational. Rebecca doesn't live in reality, so, a lot of what she does comes from a very crooked path.

**Rebecca is complex. What do you believe is her main problem?**

She just doesn't know how to go from point A to B. Rebecca is trying to guard the love she has for somebody, but in a very unhealthy way and she has convinced herself of something that, from my point of view, is all about maintaining the friendship and love they have.

**How did you prepare for the role?**

**CHILLS** Fabiha Farrales, Bianca Evan "The Reservists"

A lot of it was on the page, so the script was so good; but I also did some research, read books, listened to music, watched movies, and even spoke to a couple of psychiatrists specializing in those disorders that had gone to enroll to defend people in cases involving obsession. They gave me a lot of insight to help me understand what would cause a person to behave like this.

**Mirka Kelly plays Sara, your roommate. What is she like to work with?**

Mirka is an angel! She was really supportive and added a lot of energy and levity to everything—which was nice.

**Is your character a villain?**

I don't think Rebecca is bad. Actually, I believe she sees her good intentions, but the result is bad.

**Have you ever experienced something similar?**

I think we have all had the experience of dealing with a friend or a roommate who is a little too involved or involved. Who knows, maybe that's me. (Sigh)

**What did you enjoy the most about the experience?**

It was a pleasure to learn about people like my character, try to bring love to life, and do her justice.

**What do you like about acting?**

I can lose myself in it. (Sigh) I'm very lucky to be able to do what I love.

*Opening across the Philippines on April 6, "The Roommate" is distributed by Columbia Pictures, local office of Sony Pictures. Following tour across the country, visit http://www.columbia pictures.com.ph for trailer, exclusive content and free downloads. Like us on www.facebook.com/columbiapicturesPH and join the fun contests.*

**SUPER EXCLUSIVE**

# Switchfoot says 'Hello, Manila!' again

**Super chats with Fil-Am keyboardist-guitarist Jerome Fontanilla on the band's upcoming visit**

SWITCHFOOT's newest studio album won this year's Grammy for "Best Rock or Rap Gospel Album."

By Angela N. Ignacio
Contributor

IF YOU'RE still squirming over missing Switchfoot's high-energy concert in September 2009, here's your chance to get over it.

The American alt-rock band behind anthemic hits "Dare You To Move," "Meant To Live," "This Is Your Life" is coming back to Manila as part of its worldwide "Hello Hurricane" tour. The one-night only concert will be at PhilSports Arena (formerly Ultra) on April 30.

Comprised of Jon Foreman (vocals/guitar), Tim Foreman (bass), Chad Butler (drums), Jerome Fontanilla (keys/guitar) and Drew Shirley (guitar), Switchfoot last visited the country when four of its songs were featured in the 2009 movie "I Will Be Remember" starring Wendy Mucio.

Since then, the California quintet has sold a whopping 9.4 million albums, the most notable being 2003's multi-platinum album "The Beautiful Letdown."

As the latest in the band's seven record repertoire, "Hello Hurricane" earned Switchfoot a Grammy for this year's "Best Rock or Rap Gospel Album" category. "Hurricane" finds the singband returning to its indie roots, with more of that soothing, guitar driven sound and soulfully introspective lyrics that have touched hearts all over the world.

Super recently had a phone chat with Jerome, who's Fontanilla, arranged by Warner Music Philippines, while the band was in Los Angeles recording its newest album, "Vice Verses." And yes, he's Filipino, responding to our "kumusta?" greeting with a hearty "Mabuti!"

Congratulations on the Grammy win—**this year! How does it feel to be awarded all that honor after many years in the music business?**

It's really great to be acknowledged, but the fact that we were able to make music all these years is a bigger thing for us than the Grammys. I mean, it's an honor to win a Grammy, but I'm glad we're still making music. (Laughs)

In putting together "Hello Hurricane," **you had more than a hundred songs to choose from. How were you able to pick those tracks from so many?**

It was really difficult. There are five guys in the band, and each one has his opinion on what songs should be in the album, so we have a producer to help us decide which ones to include. Ultimately, we felt that all the songs on "Hurricane" are the songs we want to play for the rest of our lives.

**Do you have a favorite track in the album?**

All of them hold a special place, but a song that really stole me for me is "Sing It Out," where I had to write an orchestral part, a string ensemble for that song. That was the first time I actually did that, so it means a lot to me to have put a good feat on this album on the song.

Has the songwriting process changed significantly since you've gone back to your indie roots?

No, it's still pretty much the same. Jon's our songwriter; he'll play a song to just sweet, a melody and all four of us will get together and piece the song together.

We know you don't call yourselves a Christian rock band, but your faith has always been an integral part of your songs, right?

Yes. We've always felt that our faith is a big part of who we are. When you're living life and your faith is a big part of it, it will translate to the music. So you can see the things we believe in through our songs.

**Do you have any plans for a benefit concert or charity donation for those hit by calamities?**

**You know what, we were just talking about it. We're always looking for ways to help our friends in Japan, and we're looking for an avenue to help out the best we can. (PS: According to Switchfoot's management, there's a link on the band's official website where fans can donate. Log on to www.switchfoot.com or www.thewaterfund.org for more details.)**

For those who've followed Switchfoot's career, and that you moved to the US when you were three. Have you relocated the Philippines on several occasions since you first came back here?

No, I've been to Switchfoot for a while and I've been living, so I've never had the chance to go back there. I'm really excited to come back.

**What do you remember most about your Manila visit?**

I was born in Pasay City, just a few miles down from the arena we played at (Ultra's hometown), so it was really cool for me to go back there, to the city I was born in.

**How's this concert going to be different from the first one?**

We'll probably front-center what we're going to play when we're ready to go over there. We haven't really decided because we're in the studio recording, so we'll probably figure something out when it's nearer to the concert date. But yeah, we're playing a lot more "Hello Hurricane" songs.

**The part where you guys were made to eat fish at onstage last time may get by Sébastien. Any other Filipino delicacies you'd like to try this time?**

(Laughs) Honestly, I don't know. I'm used to it because my parents are Filipinos, but the others aren't, so they're kind of afraid that something might happen again. We'll try to be nicer to them this time! (Laughs)

**Any messages for your fellow Filipinos?**

I'm so excited to see my Kababayans again, so we hope to see you all at the concert!

*For ticket inquiries, call Ticketworld (tel. 891509903 or SM Tickets 14-702222). "Switchfoot Live in Manila 2011" is presented by Boss Music Inc. and Warner Music Philippines.*

**CHAD** Butler (drums), Tim Foreman (bass), Drew Shirley (guitar), Jon Foreman (vocals/guitar) and Jerome Fontanilla (keys/guitar)

SUPER LIFESTYLE

# Legomania

**The little studded bricks are back. And if you think kids are the only ones going crazy over Lego, you're wrong**

By Pam Pastor

HIS NAME is Sean, he looks about eight years old; he's in a toy store and I'm following him.

He walked past Polly Pocket, I walked past Polly Pocket.

He walked towards the Hotwheels display, I walked towards the Hotwheels display.

He stopped to check some Marvel action figures, I stopped to check some Marvel action figures.

There was a good reason I was walking these little boy Joes someone before, he snatched up the last two boxes of Lego Ninjago right under my nose. They were new—I had never seen them before. I was rummaging out for them but his chubby little hands got to them first and dumped them into his shopping cart.

LEGOMANIA P1


## The Super Pen Pal Project

**Do you miss getting good mail in the mail? We launched this project just for you.**

SUPER wants you to rediscover the joys of letter writing. How? By finding yours a pen pal.

Here's how it will work—spend an afternoon about yourself. You can talk about anything you want—your life, your pets, your crazy friends, your plans to rule the world.

If you send us a letter, you will receive the Super Pen Pal Starter Kit which will include goodies and a letter from another Super reader. You can then start corresponding with your new Super pen pal.

If you want to join, send your letter c/o: The Super Pen Pal Project
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Chino Roces Ave. corner Tapuz and Masaraldo Streets, Makati
Letters must be mailed by April 30.

## Uniquely Filipino Banig Collection by Kultura

Passing itself as a truly world-class Filipino store, **Kultura** is a showcase of the creativity and ingenuity of local artisans. With the Philippines' rich flora, the talented Filipinos has mastered the art of weaving impressive basic designs out of natural materials like tikog, salagan, pandan and buri.

Complementing the vibrant hues of the weaves, Kultura Filipino features a wide range of banig creations in varied shapes and forms. For instance, give your home a touch of summer with tikog placemats and matching placemats from Tahanan, Kultura's exclusive line of home accents. An area rug in the same material gives a well-put-together look and feel to this theme.

For trips to the beach, Tahanan can equip Kultura's selection of banig accessories, such as tikog weave slippers from Chinese by Kultura, or colorful pandan clutches from Cocoon Furniture and Bayong by Kultura. Likewise, bright buri hats and fans paired with pandan totes and handbags add a laid-back touch any where you go.

Enjoy a wide selection of uniquely Filipino banig accessories, home accents and more at **Kultura Filipina**, with stores at SM Mall of Asia Main Mall, SM Megamall Building A, The Block at SM City North Edsa, SM Makati and SM City Cebu. Great choices are also available at **Kultura Bath** at the Pico de Loro Beach Club.

Home Decor • Souvenirs • Gifts
Furniture • Fashion & Accessories

Tikog banig placemats from Tahanan by Kultura

Tikog pillowcases from Tahanan by Kultura

Pandan bags from Bayong by Kultura

Round salvacion weave placemats from Tahanan by Kultura

Colored buri hats from Tropika by Kultura

Buri fans with wooden handles, sourced from Quezon Province

Woven tikog mats from Tahanan by Kultura

Pandan weave bags from Cocoon Furniture and pouches at Bayong by Kultura

GARFIELD

A-LIPAN

PLAGAD SWERTE

DICK TRACY

LOVEBANGYS

BABY BLUES

KUBO MACHINE

BEN

HUTTS

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

DUSTIN

TULDOK

## HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DIMOS

**ARIES (March 21 to April 20)** Confusion is inevitable tomorrow's sign will always your today. Give yourself 5 minutes to make some lovely pieces and watch it to rain. Perhaps visit a park.

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** A casual friendship might be come more heated, even intimate. You might be surprised by this sudden turn of events. Either way, friendships are important today.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)** Someone in authority will ask for your creative input about something today. Don't hesitate to offer what you know because this person will be impressed.

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22)** Hard work pays off. Whether you're a student or employee, you will be rewarded for your efforts. Take the opportunity to ask for a raise or promotion.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)** Relationships are heading in a new, very way today. You might fall madly in love with someone you've known for years or you might see someone something that you have been overlooking.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)** Think of how you can improve your surroundings and avoid frustration today. Tackle this is actually possible. You might want to self-discipline.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)** A raise or praise from someone you've been working with closely. You need to be ready to be rewarded at some solutions and new uses for things. Have a cool day.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)** A mild romance might be come a very fun romance today. Creative efforts in the entertainment world or the arts also can be very productive today. Write the sparks.)

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)** Look around you're sure you can improve where you live. Clean up areas that are messy and neglected. You'll feel so much better if you make some changes instantly.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)** You're particularly eloquent today so attempt, you're very persuasive. This is a steady number for for people in sales and marketing, too!

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)** There definitely are ways for you to boost your income now. Look around for opportunities and be open to other suggestions or outside new possibilities.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)** This is a good day to shop for wardrobe items. You definitely can do something to improve your appearance. Someone with someone powerful might sweep you off your feet.

## CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

**HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU**

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

| | | | | | | | | |
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| 4 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 3 |
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| 7 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 8 |
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| 6 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 9 |
| 3 | 1 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 8 |
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**Conceptis Sudoku** By Dave Green

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Difficulty Level ★★★★

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Lies in wagon
5 Tall tale
9 Upper right-hand corner item
14 Tick off to Tuckey
15 1961 Montessori event
16 Cartoon cavy (slang)
17 Poetry inc. (lack of quotations)
18 ___ Angeles Times
19 Play homage of
20 Anti-inflation
21 Robert Lowe
22 Cartoon cavy (slang)
23 "I have spoken, for good"
24 Lambert
27 Ball bodies
28 Particular viewpoint
31 Tiger
32 Forest creatures
33 Rock genre
34 Work unit
35 A as
36 Take out (of)
37 Tall tales
38 Late response
39 Fresh (slang)
40 Work in the yard
41 Another person
42 Lot owners' offer
45 U.S. state
46 Tiptop (slang)
47 Besides
48 Informed
49 Tiptop (slang)
50 Church gesture
51 Swimmer
54 Modern Arabic

60 Loss-controlling
61 Beverages
62 Lose certain warranties
63 Downhill conquests

DOWN

1 Crowds
2 Wine
3 Bird in cyberspace
4 Takes to the bench
5 Wrongs
6 The Yankees' Clu
7 Wrongs, poor-fan
8 Sports event
9 Lyric
10 Talk back
11 Dry-removals
12 Tardy
13 Rule the roofless of
14 Particular viewpoint
15 Tiger
16 Journalism's enemy
17 Work week
18 Subscribers
19 Without care
20 Tiptop (slang) (pos)
21 Swear
22 Hairdressers' machines
23 Hard (poetic)
24 Bleakness
25 Handler's
26 Theater necessities
27 Lackluster grade
28 Tales or hints
29 Educator Horace
30 Unfeathers
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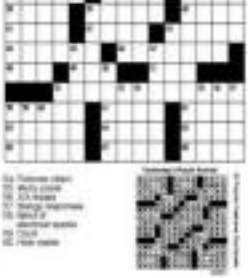


# Get your work done at Full Suite

## This rentable office space is ideal for the nomadic professional

FULL Suite has several packages to suit your working needs.

By Tobie Yang
Lead Buzz

THE HINDI known any other life than that of officeholics. I've never worked in an office, nor had my own cubby with a company-issued computer and work hours. Instead, a typical work day consists of me rising from bed, rubbing sleep from my eyes and pretending to work on whatever work is be done that day.

Yes, one of the perks of freelancing is getting to work in your underwear (bathing highly recommended but still optional), and basically being the master of your own time. While that sounds like absolute bliss, especially to those who are tied to their time cards, being in your own domicile is a double-edged sword.

Like when I find myself obsessively checking back-to-back blockbuster movies during lunch time. Or when something particularly juicy happens between your Facebook friends, or angry birds starts calling out to you. With you policing yourself, self-discipline flies out the window and before you know it, the day has passed, words undone, and you're still in your underwear flinging birds at pigs and ignoring calls from people you owe deadlines to.

THE SPACE offers different services, ranging from dropping your mail to business centers to doing your accounting.

Speaking for myself, I find that working at home is a big no-no, especially when I need to focus. So many distractions and procrastination methods are readily available. I once found myself arranging my skincare products, lining them up from smallest to biggest, just to put off work a little bit longer.

While the easiest excuse would be to hit a coffee shop or a restaurant, I find that I have to make sure I have a good set of noise-cancelling earphones and a good playlist to keep my momentum going, not to mention going at a good hour to make sure

I get prime space a cushy corner, preferably a booth, with an accessible socket in case my laptop needs recharging. I find that working in a coffee shop means contending with irritable bar students who unveil at noon/dusk and ending the day high on caffeine from one too many macchiatos.

### Maz-hana

When I heard about Full Suite, a co-working space, I knew I had to check it out. Their site promised my cup there: mana. Imma when working—high-speed Internet, refreshments, and comfy seats. Plus, they even had coffee solutions (printing, scanning, etc.), and locker service. Forget working from, I wanted to live at Full Suite.

When I arrived at the lounge, I was immediately greeted by office valet Rodel, who offered me beverages. I was given a service menu, where you can choose a plan appropriate to the length of time you need to spend at Full Suite, with prices starting at P300 (whole day), you can add another P150 for access to unlimited refreshments.

FULL Suite's co-working space lets you get the job done.

At Full Suite, you won't go hungry, as their site says the meal runs for you at any restaurant you want (wink wink) and we'll even plan it for you, too.

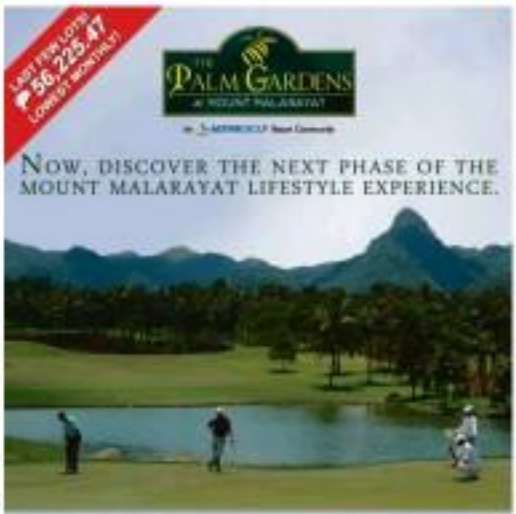
Apart from the co-working lounge, private meeting rooms have been set up as well for groups of two, three, four or even longer, perfect for those getting a start-up business off the ground who don't want to incur the cost of long-term leasing of a huge office space. We also talked for minutes working on a project looking for a recently moving plans (though Full Suite's doors is open at 6 p.m., so no overnighters allowed).

They really live up to their name, too, as Full Suite offers employers services to those looking to start a business, from registration to bookkeeping, right down to HR and marketing—all the dirty work outsourced in one neat little package.

A lot of creative projects have gone down at Full Suite, so the place has been home to several graphic designers finishing presentations, or app developers polishing their programmings. A designer even rented the space to use as a fitting area for his bridal clients.

Whether you're a freelancer looking for a quiet place to think and work, or an office regular who just needs a change in scenery, Full Suite's got you covered and more.

Full Suite is located at 20/4F Cyclone Building, 227 Salcedo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati. They're open from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Contact them at tel. no. 7595800, or email info@full-suite.com or visit their site at http://full-suite.com.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# Legomania

From page F1

SPOT the difference.

CREATOR House

SAVEN Lukes saber set, right, Lego heads

And here's the thing—he wasn't even pleasing me buying them.

"Sean, I told you, just one!" his dad said loudly, scaring everyone.

But the little Lego dealer wasn't yet cowed. "I know, I'll just choose one later."

He had other things to his eyes—like! guns, a ball and a couple of little cars so if he was going to buy just one toy, there was a huge chance he'd leave one of the Lego boxes behind. I wanted to be there when that happened so I could grab those ninjas and bring them home.

But my stallion was taking his sweet time. And I was already late for my movie. He was surrounded—but dad, older brother, "ayan," and younger sister were always hovering around him. I'm surprised they still hadn't sneered me aloud saying this. I breathed backup. I subdued the help of fear of the salesman. "If he decides not to buy one of the Legos, grab it, okay?"

Sean finally made his decision. He had narrowed his dad to let him get more than one toy—but luckily he left one of the Ninjago boxes behind. I grabbed it, paid and got out of there.

This is just one little story, a bitch out of thousands, maybe millions, a testament to the madness for Lego that has taken over the world once again.

## Lego is back

Lego is back in the Philippines, and it's not just because of the movie. Sure, the movie helped, but the Lego craze has been building for years. Lego has been around since 1949, but it was in the 1980s that it became a household name. Then, in the 1990s, it almost went bankrupt. It was saved by a new generation of fans who grew up with Lego and wanted to share the joy with their own children.

Today, Lego is more than just a toy. It's a way of life. It's a way to express yourself, to create, to imagine. It's a way to connect with others who share your passion.

The Lego movie is a perfect example of this. It's a story about a boy who builds a world out of Lego bricks, and then his father comes in and tells him that he has to put away his toys. The boy's imagination takes over, and he creates a world where anything is possible.

The movie is a love letter to Lego, and it's a reminder that Lego is more than just a toy. It's a way to connect with others, to express yourself, and to create.

So, if you're a Lego fan, or if you're just looking for a fun way to spend a few hours, I highly recommend seeing the Lego movie. It's a great way to celebrate the joy of Lego, and it's a reminder that Lego is more than just a toy.

# The Yellow Brick Road

## Satisfy your Lego lust with these shops

### 1. Hobbes & Landes (http://www.hobbesandlandes.com)

This store popular for stocking board games and polymer clay has a pretty good collection. They also have Lego-based classes, such as Lego Education for kids and Lego Robotics, where older kids can build and program robots using Lego pieces.

### 2. Build City

Build City is the go-to local place for your brick needs. They have everything from toy chairs, minifigures, starter sets and huge Lego installations. Younger kids can even join in the fun with Duplo, which features bigger blocks which are less likely to be swallowed.

### 3. Brick Link (http://www.bricklink.com)

For those who missed out on special editions or simply want to buy bricks a la carte, Brick Link is the answer to your prayers. Brick Link sells everything individually—from minifigures to faces and clothes, right down to the tiny accessories.

### 4. Amazon (http://www.amazon.com)

This huge online marketplace stocks Lego merchandise from different stores. Buy from here if you want to consolidate shopping on one tab.

### 5. Lego online (http://shop.legos.com)

Lego's official site stocks hard-to-find sets as well as randomized items. It helpfully lets you shop by category—by theme, catalog number, age group and category. Check out the individual blocks and building accessories section for those not interested in buy sets.

### 6. eBay

This is a huge treasure trove of vintage Lego pieces, individuals and sets. Make sure to check out the seller's credentials before buying.

### 7. Toy stores

Toy stores all over the metro also carry Lego, but be sure you will be able to stomach fighting over the last Ninjago box with a six-year-old.

Eddie Tang

POP-UPS and Lego people. (below) The fourth series of minifigures will be released soon.

THIS cruddy is huge.

Yes, those beloved bricks from our childhood are back—and they're coming a-score.

It's hard to believe that less than a decade ago, people started writing off Lego as dead. In the age of video games and the Internet—who would want to play with little studded bricks?

But Lego knew the way to people's hearts—through its license deals. The Danish company has tied up with Star Wars, Batman, Harry Potter, Toy Story, Prince of Persia and others to produce themed boxes fans just couldn't help but love.

Releasing their minifigures in blind packs in 2010 was also a great move. Toy stores never keep them in stock for long. Packs flew off shelves as people bought them by the box just to make sure they got a complete set of the little smiles, which included a snowboarder, a clown fanboy, a mime, a robot, a demolition dummy and more. Series 2 was also released in 2010 and met with the same amount of enthusiasm. People soon figured out how to decode the barcodes, making finding those missing minifigures easier.

Lego released Series 3 this year sans barcodes, but Lego fans have found allies in salespeople who help them figure out which minifigure they are buying by letting the little Lego guys through the bags. Collectors are eagerly awaiting Series 4 which is set to come out soon. Lego can't make these coveted minifigures fast enough.

Lego has expanded its product line—it's not just bricks and mini little minifigures anymore. There are watches, boardgames, video games, cameras, lamps, booth bases and more.

### Minifigures

At Lego's huge store in Rockefeller Center in New York, you can often find parents on the floor, helping their kids choose which packs to buy. A dad was even armed with a Blackberry, which he used for scanning the barcodes of barcodes.

Here in the Philippines, stocks of the minifigures often disappear on the day they arrive in stores. Yes, Lego has a large Filipino fan base—large enough for a store like Build City, which sells mostly Lego products, to be born.

And it's you think kids are the only ones going crazy over Lego, you're wrong.

"Lego reminds me of great childhood memories," says Joel, a 27-year-old graphic artist. "Building the Lego sets are a great way to relax after a stressful week. I enjoy it a lot. I just wish I had kept the bricks I had as a child." And loves the Star Wars theme and the Architecture sets.

All, a 31-year-old photographer, says she loves Lego because she enjoys taking photos of the minifigures. "They're so photogenic." Her big Lego collection includes sets from Lego's architecture, Harry Potter, City, Ninjago, Toy Story, Star Wars and Creator lines. She's also a huge fan of the collectible minifigures and has worked hard on completing her sets, buying not just from stores here in Manila and abroad but from the Internet. "Salespeople in toy stores have my number, and they text me updates when new works arrive. I can't wait for Series 4 to come out."

I can't wait either. The punk rocker, gnome, monster and historian girl will be mine.

STATUE of Liberty Lego

AT THE LEGO store in New York, you can build your own minifigure.

TALK to the hand.

LITTLE Red Riding Lego

### Buying do's and don'ts

DON'T spend your Lego high through bad resellers or bogus purchases. Keep these tips in mind before you buy:

1. Bidding on eBay? Check the seller's reputation first. Make sure to keep an open line of communication with the seller especially when using our often unreliable local postal system.

2. Look for lots. Can you imagine paying almost P900 to ship just one measly crying face? Check other sellers who sell their stuff in lots or sets, e.g. 10 assorted minifig girl hairstyles. Sure you'll be overpaying, but you probably won't hate your whole person for other stuff you need in your collection.

3. Bring Binders. Before the sales-announcers get smart and labeled their blind-packed minifigures, customers had to rely on discerning corresponding parts through the packaging to gauge which minifigure it was. Bring along the binders notebooks with the existing set pack to avoid buying doubles.

Table Tang

# I still live the Lego life

## The best places on the 'net to get your fix of these endearing yellow-faced minifigs

LEGO Lea and the author's dog

AMAZING action-packed diorama by Lego minifigs

AMAZING action-packed

By Tavin Tang
Contributor

WE HAVE put away our bright Lego bricks from our childhood for a long time ago, but the beloved and recognizable yellow face continues to figure in our lives.

It was Lego that made me buy a Jedi PEP—a friend was playing Lego Star Wars, and after I saw a Lego-fied Han Solo dog Chewbacca, I was hooked and bought myself the gaming device the following day and played nothing but Lego Star Wars.

It was also these Lego minifigs (showing at 3Pod that made me realize that about level life of Lego Lore, a blog on Lego life dedicated to my Lego alter ego memorizing the more interesting or photogenic parts of my day. Lego Lore is on hiatus, so accounts of her human alter ego-doesn't forgetting to bring a camera—that, and after I discovered just how many awesome and better Lego enthusiasts there are.

Like Mike Shinjoya and his brilliant sidekick depicting hilarious fantastical events using Lego minifigures, or Alex Kyllar and his recreation of scenes from popular movies. In both, the behind-the-scenes set-up of just how they managed to pose their Lego minifigs, light it, and create Godzilla-size it is most enviable.

I'm reluctant to admit it, but I am already of an age where my childhood favorites have become either obsolete or unpopular. I'm glad that the bright colors smiling faces I remember and love are still very much alive and beloved by today's kids, as much so that I find myself burning to wrestle with them over the last Lego minifigure in the toy store.

LEGO Lea and Chuck Norris

LEGO minifig drowning at the pop-up beach

## Lego to go

### 1. Mike Stimpson

(http://www.flickr.com/photos/bulldozer)

Stimpson's dioramas are not just for Lego freaks, they're also a good study for photography enthusiasts. His photos use minimal Photoshop, where he prefers to stage the scene entirely versus fixing everything after with software.

### 2. Alex Eylar

(http://www.flickr.com/photos/toyvenevsky)

His Lego tributes to him will be something you'll look forward to. He somehow manages to recreate depth and emotion out of the minifigure's yellow smiling face, either that, or we're just too fixated on our Legos.

### 3. Legos are Terrible

(http://legos-are-terrible.com/)

If you've ever wondered what to get Lego aficionados, copycats, or other things Lego, this site is the one to visit. Legos collects anything and everything Lego from the 'net, and feeds it to you, one juicy block at a time.

### 4. Jill Lejuna

(http://hopeful-bandit.com/)

She combines her love for pop-up books and Lego. Her tableaux often feel like love-letters to it. We also want one of these more of her Lego-produced scenes, so we can print and send them to friends.

### 5. BrickBins

(http://www.brick-bins.com/)

If you haven't found your next cool Lego set, you haven't been looking hard enough. BrickBins will surely tip you over the edge. Here you'll find a community of brickfilmers—people who make stop-motion animation using Lego or other brick elements. You can also become your own producer, writer, and director of a Lego-star-and-bar. Thanks to their tutorials and forum. Now that's brickfilmed (haha).

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Heightened level of competition on 'Idol' /G4

Editor Nestor U. Torre ● Assistant Editor Rita P. Avila

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# Time out for good news on TV—for a change

STORY ON PAGE G2

## Another my|phone first, mag-negosyo through your phone!

Now on its third year, myphone is already reshaping the mobile phone industry of the Philippines with its notable phones' innovations, quality and affordability. From pioneering dual SIM technology to phones with cameras, video & mp3 functions, to TV, Qwerty, touch screen and even WiFi phones, all myphone products are affordable for Filipinos. The company has a lot of firsts up its sleeves. It created the first patented prayer phone in the world that contains audio prayers such as novenas and prayer alarms as part of the patented software.

Last year, myphone launched the Music Album Phone (MAP) which contains songs from the country's top singers like Sarah G, Rivermaya, Mark Bautista and more. The music album phone not only provided a fresh channel for Pinoy artists but it also supports the government's drive against music piracy through its special technology which embeds the music file in the phone in a way that it cannot be copied by a computer.

Now myphone launches a new first, the mynegosyo. mynegosyo gives myphone users and ever- budding entrepreneurs convenient access to LoadCentral services through a unique, patented menu interface. This is in partnership with LoadCentral the most successful distribution solution provider for all prepaid services in the country today.

The new mynegosyo, along with its gaming partners (Boongo Online, Ragnet, Mobius Online, Sagkaptan International, IP E-games, Game Duty, Sidhya, Digital Manilen, Gamma, Cubinet, Level Up, Friendzlab Pilas, and PlayEBAZ make it easier for myphone to reach out to the young market especially in the gaming community.

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**Starting and selling load is very easy.** Just get a myphone (which can go as low as P1,199) plus initial load which you can register with LoadCentral and you can already start sharing or selling phones and online gaming load! And because of the mynegosyo patented menu, it's very easy. Unlike when you are using other phones, you have to follow 4-5 steps to pass load. With myphone, you won't have to memorize the telco codes or syntax and the numbers to send it to because all these information are already on the menu. Access the menu and in two clicks, you're on. The makers mynegosyo easier to use than normal pass-load services. You can share load with friends and family fast. Or you can have a business at the tip of your fingers.

And when you transact with LoadCentral using myphone's mynegosyo, the loads will be sold to you at up to 15% discount. Another plus is the auto-detect feature where the menu will automatically detect telco partners Sun, Smart and Globe promos to make everything very easy.

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# Time out for good news on TV—for a change

MORALES. Welcome change of pace.

By Nestor U. Torre

MAYBE YOU had a cup to have with all of the bad news that TV newscasts have been bombarding us with? Even if this is the case, in some network executives are announced, last year, a definitely good news, because reports about disasters, wars, crimes, fires and accidents never viewed out so much. And they keep wanting, this becoming a newscast's ratings.

But, if you think that the newscasters focus on doom-and-gloom news have started to take a notion of sensation, you may want to balance the picture by watching "Good Morning" the GMA News TV channel's deservedly upbeat and positive "news with a smile" program.

We watched the new show anchored by Vicky Morales as events, and found it a welcome change of pace from all of the "negative" newscasts on the tube. It definitely accentuated the positive in terms of the stories and presentation it featured, and demonstrated its premise spirit of initiative by looking for inspirational stories to not usually given the time of day by more aggressively "check [value]" oriented shows.

## Upbeat

The only fly in the new program's ointment is its length—a half hour is much time devoted to the positive and the upbeat, and to get to find a bit too much of pretty much the same things. If you've got a good thing going, you should know when enough's enough—and more of the same can end up being overwhelming and counterproductive.

So, the people behind "Good News" may want to rethink the show's duration, and see it as two 15-minute packages, perhaps one Saturday and Sunday. That way, they'll be no need for nagging and dragging, which is sometimes the case in the course of the one-hour show.

Having said that, we hope that the also behind "Good News" can keep up the good ratings will motivate other newscasts to be less drab and cynical in their choice and presentation of "hot" news stories.

After all, newscasts are supposed to be all about informing, not "venting" personal "agenda" and the objective is to sufficiently inform viewers about current events and their significance and impact on their lives.

The channel appears also to be, relatively, straight and good judgment should prevail, not letting newscasters abuse their benefits and feel threatened.

## Capacity

Trouble is, some TV people have a love regard for viewers' capacity to be thoughtful and concern about the news they get on what to them is the appropriate "news value." Such "soft" Our to anything and everything to make the news "exciting" and scintillating as watching a action film or melodramatic lovers'.

Viewers are prone that they're angels of moral, better stuff be patronizing news programs that don't entertain them, and "Good News" could be one of them—in its abridged form, that is. Mind it: next Saturday and see if you agree.

R-18 NOW SHOWING

# How 'Thrilla in Manila' changed the TV industry

By Nona Salvadores Gonzalez

THE NEXT time you tune on your TV set, think of "Thrilla in Manila"—and Rose Kopecki.

There was a time when episodes of outmoded programs from America came to us three months late. There were no Internet or satellite dishes. Even Kopecki says that getting things on the air in real time around the world—round-the-clock—was a lot to do with the epic fight between Joseph Frazier and Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier.

Many of us who remember that night had no idea that a fight aired in the Philippines would be pivotal to television as we know it today. Kopecki, founder of USA Network and the first women network president in TV history, and at the current "Leadership Matters" program headed by Ateneo's Business Council Philippines, share it did.

To understand how that happened, think of groundrulers and surfers Arthur C. Clark ("The Space Odyssey"), who in Ray's fancy, "I grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and was always curious and competitive. One day, I saw an announcement about a free tennis lesson on ground-satellite." That got the ball rolling. Fast forward to "Thrilla in Manila."

"Thrilla in Manila' was the most important boxing match in history because it was the night that changed the course of TV history," Kopecki shared. That night, she gathered decision-makers together and, on satellite, she showed them that a boxing match in the Philippines could be aired in real time on television in the US—and anywhere in the world.

## Possibilities

It set the path for cable TV and satellite dishes. But, it took more than dreaming possibilities, recalled her source-economic model.

Kopecki recalled, "In those days, if you wanted a show on TV, you paid for air time, and you were dependent on advertisements. When we started cable TV, we received the economic model. The cable viewer paid us, and when we had enough homes, we got advertising."

Media opens up minds. We were surprised by the comment Kopecki made about the events currently unfolding in the Middle East.

Those developments don't surprise Kopecki, who explained, "People want to have the freedom of their minds. Despite government will, [so] if people know how to be free." Indeed, knowledge is power.

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# Glittering new venue

ACCORDING to general manager Jeanne Ledesma Sycip, the Constellation Diamond Hotel's glittering new venue designed by Jose Cuido Colmo on the 27th floor, is a premier event destination for meetings, conferences and parties overlooking picturesque Manila Bay. Some of its notable

Aura is a much smaller than its sister venue, Proscenio's ultimate studio furnished with state-of-the-art audio-visual facilities. Let is a luxurious conference room with motorized screen, ceiling-mounted projectors and LED TV.

## Function areas

Aquarius, Gemini, Sagittarius and Capricorn are function areas that offer flexible spaces for a wide range of events.

Nicholas Sycamore is the hotel's executive chef, while Daniel Lee Hock is its pastry chef. Diamond Hotel is on Roxas Blvd. cor Dr. J. Quirino st., Manila. Visit www.diamondhotel.com, or call 528-8000.

Join the Banana Photo Safari on May 6-8. Visit: mandy.sunsaero.blogspot.com, e-mail: mandysunsaero@yahoo.com, or call 486-2367.

# Counterproductive moves

QUINTO (LEFT) AND HAZELA. Loud and Brit-mod chirpy.

By Nestor U. Torre

IT'S OBVIOUS that "Strut Power" means, Angeline Quinto, in doing everything she can to become a stylized singing star, but none of her moves, like her tongue rant with Jed Madela in "HAM!" diminish either than aided to her stellar shine.

Both Jed and Angeline may come really high-level vocalists to delight and dazzle their fans. But...is number of these pacing ballads and duets were mercifully diminished, else to their and just plain out of tune.

To be sure, some people were most impressed with the two singers' loud and brash vocal display—but, to watch the musical turns and deconstruct in those parts, where volume is mistaken for quality, and high-pitched shrieks are regarded as signs of virtuosity.

If they really tend to become exceptional singers, Angeline and Jed should listen to a tape of their recent performance with a vocal expert, who can point out their musical sins. And, to gain absolution, they must persuade never to sing/sing/sing/sing/sing again.

**Feats of derring-do**

"In Intimo," is their quirkily coy in the bin, the two singers aren't exclusively at fault: They're merely giving the listening public what it wants to hear.—"impossible" feats of vocal derring-do for their own sake.

Even "established" singing stars occasionally complain about their host insistence on live's for host's sake. That point out that, in duetting singers who like "favorites on the," contenders don't have to decide to impress the jurors...who in her caution their current inverting to vocal display just to bowl over the listening public.

So, why do some local movie fans acquire and even demand of filmmakers they've most, or by

## Trips, cash await video fest winners

CEBUANISCO @WORK: AnadTV spokesperson

THE BARANGAY on Kinetyn Media Festival welcomes entries in short videos, 60TV mini-documentary and photography categories until April 18. This was recently announced by Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, AnadTV spokesperson.

The entries, shot using handphones, videocams and digicams portraying any theme that affects 60 grams under 18 and their communities, will be featured in the festival on May 20 to 22 in Tacloban City, under the auspices of AnadTV, Film Intercontinental, Philippine Information Agency, UP Tacloban, DepEd and CHED, Colombo's, Leyte Normal University, PCIA, DWP and Robinsons Malls.

### Entries

Entries must be sent in DVD format to AnadTV, 8A Mayang st., Pinyahan, Quezon City. For details, visit anadtv.web.com.

Winners in the video category will join the Philippine youth delegation in the Seoul International Film Fest in June, and selected entries will be sent to international competitions in New Delhi, Nairobi, Tokyo, London, Rome and Munich.

All entrants to the competition will receive certificates of participation, and top winners will get cash incentives and trophies.

# 'Party'-crashing in Cebu

By Rito P. Asido

DO YOU wonder what goes on behind the glamour and frenzied glitz of those Sunday noontime musical variety shows? We found the answer last weekend when our "Cosmo" Girls 7's splashy spree in Cebu to the Kapuso network's celebrated the 3rd anniversary of "Party Pilipinas," with simultaneous merry-making in Manila, Baguio and Davao.

Along with Manila Bulletin's Senior Creatives, we were given free rein to "smog" around while Dutch Racquel, Marlon Aruta and director Rommel Endico coordinated with the management of Hush Lodge (Mactan), Noel Cabangangan (Baguio) and Ding Salazar (Davao) to ensure the show that had the country in a "Party" mood.

For the "Captain Barbell" launch, we were half expecting to see Richard Gutierrez clad in his superhero garb, suspended in the air and flying around the Lodge Center of the 41-story Crown Regency on busy Puente Osmeña ave. It's such luck.

### Star-struck onlookers

Instead, some 300 feet below, we watched the daring heartthrob generate star-struck chicks, kicks and crush collisions as he was hoisted around the area on a seesaw. Here we spotted about sixty-ish Sub. Wife Richard's feisty mother, Anabelle Rama, assured, we were sure the neighbors raring to get a shot at her son didn't stand a chance!

Our early morning rules were forgiven as Cebu lost words, like "pantyng" viewers saw on TV aren't as glitzy as it seemed. The sensitive host was overlooking while the guests were wet and muddy—but, the 15,000-strong crowd that filled up the Osmeña Circle didn't seem to mind. My were impressed at how the team dealt with this unexpected "inconvenience"—by calling out a huge, white canvas to cover the muddy ground! Talk about logistical improvisation.

It was interesting to see how this "organized chaos" worked. While Lani Pao and Hilton Ramos were being coached for their quick-change, Bianca King, Iza Pinto, Krista Kleiner and Frenchezka Iler rehearsed their dance routine with young seniors. Elmo Magalona, Julie Ann San Jose, Benjo Arellano, Aldus Pahlman and The Guys were headed by James Ejibbe and Jaya, who spoke to the thrilled audience in Cebuano. While waiting for her opening cue, the bitching Frenchezka told us that performers on "Party Pilipinas" are now required to rehearse at least twice a week.

GUTIERREZ AND HEUSAFF: Glamour and frenzied glitz

WARD: Crowd favorite

One performer who didn't need a lot of rehearsals was pressurizer Iyke. Affectionately, she thrilled the crowd as she threw kisses at them, then danced and played with Britney, who looked like she was having the time of her life.

### Excitement

In the control booth, the excitement was even more palpable. In front of around 14 monitors, we caught Antares ordering production people to work up the mood. Beside her were Gacho and Gil Atienza, directing how to synchronize Gutierrez's Captain Barbell entrance as Shamrock's Mitch Tapia sang in Manila. At one point, someone said that he wanted a replacement for Lord, because he couldn't "find her"—but, happily, he eventually did.

In the midst of all that interesting "dynamic," we watched the monitors showing the actual show in all its synchronized polish, and marveled at how this hardworking team had made everything look easy in the small screen—all in a day's work!

# Heightened level of competition on 'Idol'

By Nestor U. Torre

WITH ONLY 10 finalists still standing, this year's "American Idol" singing "ID" is heating up the most hotly contested edition of the contest in quite a number of years.

Why the heightened level of competition? A number of explanations have been advanced, but the most pertinent factor in our view is the "kinder, gentler" thinner and temperament of the popular Idol's current board of judges.

TYLER, LOPEZ AND JACKSON: "Kinder, gentler" threat.

Randy Jackson, Jennifer Lopez and Steven Tyler may come up with occasional zingers that make contestants quiver and quake, but they're tiny firecrackers when compared to the Super Lolo unleashed by Simon Cowell in his heydays as Idol head.

Yes, Cowell said he was being cruel only to be kind, but his victims would definitely not agree. It could even be argued that his snarling put down prevented some talents from doing their best and making the grade, thus robbing the competition of the edgy variety and personality needed by new singers to strain it to the biz.

### Encouraging remarks

Well, all that is in the past, since this year's board of jurors has been almost always kind and encouraging. In fact, the perhaps, especially to Lee, have seemed to be too kind, in the interest of allowing some rather mediocre talents to pass muster.

On the plus side, however, they have come up with finalists who are less predictably homogenous than in years past, each with his own personality. The result is the higher level of entertainment that's currently evident, with at least five finalists figuring strongly in the weekly skirmish for the top place.

Sadly due to the Idol's predominantly teen-female demographic in terms of target viewers and voters, all female bets, a couple of whom are very stellar in terms of looks and talent, have been voted off, one after the other, while the male finalists have been able to linger in there.

Last March 18, for instance, all three of the fastest scorers were females...and a good bet, Karen Rodriguez, was voted off. (Why not the finalist with the talent, instead?) It's a good thing that "one" bet, Thia Megia, was able to survive another week, despite her lackluster performance. (She must be getting a lot of "loyalist" votes from Pil-Am and Asian-American viewers.)

### Track record

Going by the Idol's track record, however, it isn't likely that a female finalist will romp off with the title this year. But, if Thia is able to hang on for a few more weeks, she could garner enough exposure like previous "losers" Jennifer Hudson and Katharine McPhee, to firm up her careers.

Incidentally, this year's "American Idol" is shaping up as an interesting bundle of contradictions. That week's show was down some 10 percent in the viewership ratings, but took in a record number of 40 million voters. What's going on here?

It looks like, while fewer people are watching, the competition has become so heated that the remaining finalists' loyalists have been galvanized into working extra hard to generate that record number of viewers' votes. ...Interesting times for the show, indeed!

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NOW SHOWING

## McConaughey returns to dramatic roots in legal thriller

By Rica F. Asis

IF GUILTY people have rights, what about those who are innocent? Director Brad Furman raises this question in his scorching courtroom adaptation of Michael Connelly's novel, "The Lincoln Lawyer." Problem is, to the morally undecided world Furman creates—unaware, for him that not the aggrieved squad from the aggrieved petty increasingly lazy—which is part of what makes the movie tick and click with viewers. It'll keep you guessing!

In this Grisham-style legal thriller, the perceived "victim" is wealthy 32-year-old pretty boy, Louis Roulet (Ryan Phillippe), who's accused of raping and beating up a prostitute. He says he'd rather rot in jail than own up to a crime he didn't commit!

Enter sleazy-smart lawyer, Mick Haller (Matthew McConaughey). Roulet doesn't belong to his regular clientele of gangsters and hookers, but the stubborn defense attorney isn't one of your conventional legal eagles, either. He does most of his work from the back seat of his chauffeur-driven Lincoln Town Car (to save on office rent)!

### Botched case

Mick doesn't much care if his client is guilty or not—as long as he's paid his due. Unknown to many, however, he is still haunted by the botched case of Jesse Montrose. Michael Peña's as convicted man who had to plead guilty (of murder) to get a deep sentence reduced.

Little does Mick know that Montrose's situation holds the key to the resolution of Roulet's increasingly convoluted case—a volatile scenario that propels the lawyer to take desperate risks and make hard decisions.

MCCONAUGHEY AND PHILLIPPE. Overhead at twice, and it wins.

While the prosecuting attorney (Josh Lucas) and a detective (Bryan Cranston) hear things down his neck, Mick needs all the help he can get from former clients, an investigator (William H. Macy), a bondsman (John Leguizamo) and his ex-wife (Marisa Tomei)—who are undeniably the most interesting characters in the movie. And, this time, it's more than just Mick's license that's on the line.

### More engaging

Anchored by McConaughey's finely honed portrayal (he returns to his strong dramatic roots after years of rom-com clunkers), the film's exposition is briskly paced, and made even more engaging by its spry and quirky supporting cast.

Furman effectively builds tension in his less interesting plotlines, and leverages and reverses coin together and vice-versa. The production doesn't know how to cop to its excesses, however—and spends infinity weight it down. It forcibly cements with turns and twists—sometimes, even when the twinkles no longer call for them.

But, that's nitpicking. Truth is, the movie is so entertaining it's thrilling. In, it looks like McConaughey has "unsubbed" into a potentially successful franchise. Sunday of the meandering promise to displayed in Joel Schumacher's big-screen adaptation of John Grisham's "A Time to Kill"—more 20 years ago!

## Edgy roles boost stars' thespic cachet

By Nestor U. Torre

MOST NEW FILM projects are "potentially predictable," using their stars' proven "moviebuilt" of roles and like types. Discovering edgy bearing adds, however, top-shelf actors can be surprising and even scandalous and risky. But, if done well, could boost their popularity and thespic cachet even more, precisely because they're so unexpected and "dangerous."

That unusual combination of risk and reward just about sums up Leonardo DiCaprio's latest film assignment. Superior director Clint Eastwood has paid DiCaprio the supreme compliment of casting him as one of the 20th century's most enigmatic and controversial figures, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover.

The assignment is "shocking," because Hoover was thought to mirth and even cruel in his official appearances, but a bundle of complex contradictions in his private life.

For one thing, he was rumored to have "more than a professional relationship" with his assistant, Clyde Tolson (played by Armie Hammer of "The Social Network").

DiCaprio has worked with ace directors before, with films. Scorsese getting the gifted group of top filmmakers, but his new project with Eastwood is expected to become a highlight of his thespic career. So, he's giving their "J. Edgar" cinematic challenge his very best he's got.

To make the project even more "important," Eastwood has stuck it against to name DiCaprio's performance with the portrayals of some of the film world's most respected icons—Marlon Brando as Hoover's longtime secretary,

DOUGLAS. Thespic edge and "bungee."

DICAPRIO. Unusual combination of risk and reward.

Helen Gandy; Judi Dench as his very protective mother, and Golden Globe winner Naomi Watts as Charles Lindbergh.

### Douglas as Liberace

Another considerable acting challenge is "Liberace," on the pay life and financial times of the flamboyant pianist. The big surprise is that Liberace will be played by—Michael Douglas! It's a big stretch for the studio actor to play a flamboyantly rich and gay but Douglas has the thespic edge and "bungee" to pull it off with memorable and potentially award-winning distinction.

At first, we thought that Douglas' beat with the Big "C" would write him to the project, but he's been recovering so well that the important film is a "go." Now, we know Hollywood's got a good actor down—for long.

On TV, things are much less edgy and risky on the casting front. But, Estrada Kinnear and Kelly Holmes are sterling exceptions to that cloudless rule. Because they've been given the difficult task of portraying no less than John F. Kennedy and his wife, Jackie, respectively, in the new mini-series, "The Kennedys."

Their performances have passed muster, but the production has been lambasted by conservatives because some members of the Kennedy family have objected to its depiction of John's "womanizing ways" and proclivity for the company of beautiful women.

So, it was toasted down by the History Channel, where it was first set to air, and was picked up instead by the lesser-known, barely cable channel, which has benefited a lot from all of the attendant controversy and publicity.

# FANS' DAY Revillame is at it again

By Andy Bats

TV HOST Willie Revillame is in the news once again, this time for a segment on "Willing Willie" that showed a 6-year-old boy getting like a madwoman.

Jeanne Velasco-Rivera, a mom, tutor and lola of two boys, is deeply disturbed. "I couldn't bear to watch it! When I saw the boy grooving again on an eleven oil platform, with girls scream ing at his feet, I switched off.

"I'm appalled at how abusive Revillame was. The way he laughed at the boy was downright rude, and asking the boy to repeat what he was doing was a clear case of exploitation.

"Even more disturbing was the way the host's aunt cheered, and how the studio audience was laughing on hard. I can't even begin to comprehend what the officers of the boy's 10 minutes of 'fame' will be."

## Station ID: Kuya Kim

Kuya Kim gets ready for his station ID with Kris Aquino

Kuya Kim gets ready for his station ID with Kris Aquino

Kuya Kim gets ready for his station ID with Kris Aquino

# Fair Trade Summer Blast sale at ManoMano

From page H4

...G Tabsa ave., Quezon City. Call Emily at 634-7626 or 913-5651.

## Movies on TV

On HBO today at 8 p.m., "Star Trek" (2009). April 3 at 9 p.m., "Inception." April 4 at 9:55, "My Cousin." April 5 at 7:15 p.m., "Chasing Liberty." April 6 at 8 p.m., "Unstoppable." April 7 at 8 p.m., "Rocky." April 8 at 7 a.m., "Hancock."

On Cinemax today at 7:40 a.m., "Transporter." April 3 at 7:30 a.m., "The Bridge on the River Kwai." April 4 at 6 a.m., "Battle of the Bulge." April 5 at 3:35 p.m., "Hud." April 6 at 8 p.m., "Lakeview Terrace." April 7 at 6 a.m., "Fahrenheit 451." April 8 at 6 a.m., "Beetlejuice."

## Conference

From page H4

Miller was honest enough to say that, as an actor, Cimber has no right to ascribe motives to books of the sixteenth. Having said that, the company is public, it doesn't make any profit. Even if you're in foreign areas, the issues might be alien to many you. ABC is an honest organization. I hope that gives you comfort—but, unfortunately, you can't do much."

Rewards was stunned when he learned that Filipino movie workers don't have an organized union. He stressed, "The creation of a union is a basic right. You are in a democracy, so it should be possible."

He had good news, too. "Find out what is distinctly Filipino, because that is what has made your film successful abroad."

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
1 THE LINCOLN LAWYER (NTG 15) 12:00, 2:50, 5:40, 8:30, 11:20 PM
2 SOURCE CODE (NTG) 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40
3 SUCKER PUNCH (NTG) 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
4 HOP (NTG) 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 8:20, 10:40
5 HOP 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:20
6 SOURCE CODE 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
7 SUCKER PUNCH 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:20
POWER PLANT CINEMA
THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO - R18 1:30, 4:50, 7:50, 10:50
THE LINCOLN LAWYER - PG13 12:00, 3:00, 5:50, 7:55, 10:00
HOP - SP 12:20, 2:30, 4:35, 6:20, 8:20, 10:20
SOURCE CODE 1:10, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 10:20
SUCKER PUNCH (Digital 2D) "CLOSE LOOK - R13" 12:45, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 8:00, 10:25
SUCKER PUNCH (Digital 3D) "CLOSE LOOK - R13" 10:40, 3:05, 5:25, 7:45, 10:30
NEWPORT CINEMAS
1 CATCH ME I'M IN LOVE 2:30, 4:50, 7:15, 10:15
2 HOP
3 SUCKER PUNCH in 2D 2:05, 4:55, 7:10, 10:15
4 SOURCE CODE 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40
Regency Theatre
Shall Cinema 1
Shall Cinema 2
Cinema 3
Cinema 4
Cinema 5
Cinema 6
Cinema 7
Cinema 8
Cinema 9
Cinema 10
Shall Cinema 4
3D
PLATINUM CINEMA
HOP
SUCKER PUNCH
SOURCE CODE
LINCOLN LAWYER
CATCH ME, I'M IN LOVE
EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE
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# Elizabeth Taylor's backstage Golden Globe moments revealed

LOS ANGELES—The recent passing of Elizabeth Taylor inspired star colleagues to share some anecdotes about the big screen's legendary actress and philanthropist, especially in connection with her appearances at the Golden Globe Awards.

Here's one: "In the 2001 Golden Globes, when Elizabeth Taylor won the 'grand finale' as the presenter of the Best Picture Drama, she unobtrusively exited to announce the winner before receiving the nominees.

"When Bob Clark frantically called to her from offstage during the live telecast and alerted her about the gaffe, Elizabeth, always possessing a quick wit, calmly smiled and said, 'Oh, I guess I'm more used to receiving awards rather than giving them!'"

### At her heaviest

Another colleague told us about this backstage drama involving Liz and Bob Goldthwait (the controversial pugnacious who was once punched in the face by Heather Brooks and stood by Jackie Onassis) when she received the Cecil B. DeMille award in 1985: "Taylor's people, who included her publicist, Chen Sam, wanted to know if Gabella was covering the telecast. He took that awful picture of Elizabeth at her very, very heaviest.

"When we said, 'Yes, he was synchronized,' we were told that Elizabeth wouldn't attend if Bob was present. The one who was in charge of our press at the time jumped the gun and told Bob that we were taking away his credentials, because Elizabeth didn't want him there. Bob made a big fuss and threatened to sue Elizabeth, claiming that she was interfering with his livelihood. Eventually, both Elizabeth and Sam attended, but before we, the press, a happy camper, at least in the beginning."

In last weekend's show of tribute to Taylor's designers, Oliver Tolentino, at the Fairmont Week II Suites 2011 in Palm Springs, California, Filipina supermodel, Tanay Marinella Fuentes, brought dramatic flair to the designer's clothes. Being incapable of wearing a "frock" (a la Scott of Bjilbit, La Times's assistant "Gallagrow" or kneeling while wearing Oliver's billowy wedding gown, resurrected the elan award.

### Acting experience

She added: the UP alumna, who's now based in San Diego, if she has any acting experience. "Wala po," replied Tanay (the quipped), "Pero, nung bata ako, lagi kong pinag-aralan na nag-aacting ang mga artista sa pelikula. Gusto kong gawin 'yung mga ginagawa nila. Siguro may galing ako, kaya nagpe-pretend along nagaling."

"I was just praying not to fall or cry onstage," admitted Bailey, who had agonized for months on end to choosing Oliver's well-received autumn collection. "It would be embarrassing if I fell, since there were many people watching. But, kidding aside, every design evokes an emotion. Every detail of clothing is an element of a story. The designer's choice of fabric, color, length and style are means, excuse to communicate a feeling. In the case of runway modeling, it's up to the model to convey this emotion."

On how she managed to kneel while wearing the wedding gown with the voluminous skirt, Tanay said, "That's the good thing when you're wearing a big gown—you can find your inner centre of gravity. Also, my nostalgic nature by gears. The audience probably wouldn't notice even if I tap danced."

### Patients

When she's not pressing and meticulously draping herself against a solitary message or bending it in Pitbi Cortes (Oliver's American model's soloed him, "So we do that, too!"), Tanay works as a nurse. "My patients' primary needs (but I also model," she deadpanned. "I work in the emergency room and, a lot of times, my patients aren't alert."

Tanay who claims that she prefers her name to be spelled as Jacy, admitted she dislikes catwalk is fun, but being a nurse is also fulfilling. "Midnight ang eye-experience de se emergency room, para mo mauwi ako as a model," she remarked. "I think a fashion show is also a performance of life. It's a cliché, but life is short. Kaya ngayon, whenever I do a show, I always enjoy it!"

The Pinay stressed that she was a third Supermodel finalist but didn't win, contrary to some reports. Her win, she did win in the Best Model of the World of the Philippines contest and clinched the first Grandé honors in an international competition in Turkey.

Despite her focus on the runway, Tanay is serious about her training career. "I'm currently studying to get my CEN (Certified Emergency Nurse) certification," she revealed. "It's not a requirement at work, but it's more like a professional achievement. I also do volunteer work whenever I can. I cried when I volunteered at the Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) when they had a triathlon in San Diego. Ang galing nila! Inspiring talaga sa amigos."

### Fashion week

Oliver makes it a point to invite Tanay in advance about his coming shows, so she can take off from her nursing job and model his eco-friendly creations in abaca and jatha fabrics, whether in the fashion week in the Bahamas, LA or Palm Springs. "I love Oliver's continued support of the Philippines' economic development," she said. "I love his ingenuity, craftsmanship and his great respect for his profession. Aliem nang pinag-aralan 'yon ang hard at detail."

The designer gushed about his muse. "We love having a Filipina supermodel, and specifically Tanay, to open and close my shows, because she connects so well," he said. "We insisted that the Bahamas and El Paseo show organizers use her. I let her perform, and the audience loves her! Even the models clap for Tanay when they watch her on the backstage monitor."

For Tanay, who is married to Nick Bayon, a former basketball player with the Negros Slashers team, the pull of the life is just as strong as the runway. Tanay said that she will definitely get her master's degree in nursing.

E-mail rvsquier_1105@inbox.com

TAYLOR. Queen's win

HARISTELA-FASANO. The Pinay supermodel is also a nurse.

FUN activities with popular characters from Children's Channel.

## When theater helped keep the peace

By Rolito Cervantes

THE YEARS was 1979. I had just been released from Bicutan and was scheduled to direct Bum Bagat's prize-winning play "Kalipunan," whose title I decided to make more subversive and revised drawing: "Siguro ng Bayan."

Dissent against martial law was at its peak on the UP campus then. I had just directed Bagat's "Pagsamba Pasyon," so I needed something to top its radical message.

The opposition party, Laban, put up a slate led by Sisco Iquino to run against Imelda Marcos' brownout politicians—and it used the songs of Joe Restinge in the playlist to campaign.

### Stops

Six frameworks and four scenelines were represented in the large cast. So, whenever there was talk of a key number, or scene, we tried to take the stage to keep the problem from aggravating.

Brix Ilgenan Ramsey Lanzarrenzed dudes fearlessly as

DAZ AND LAZO (FOURTH AND SECOND FROM LEFT). Led the cast of "subversive" musical.

panic Gloria Diaz and her cynical alter-ego, Rita Rosenkranz, acting with them was student leader, Raul Bangalupat.

After graduation, Raul took graduate studies in Law at Yale and eventually became dean of the UP College of Law. In the photo handling hostile fists is Bonjo Oliveros.

Interestingly, Benjie had a big thesis. Today, he's the spokesperson of a labor union and does extremely well delivering fiery political speeches. Opposite him is Antonio Ma. Ana.

In the foreground is Linda Ohoch Sentod is Portia Go, who's now a doctor. Beside her is Cig Quesada, who married Gus Marquez.

Beside him is Yvette Sanchez, whom I introduced to fellow Bicutanero for his film, "Agatha." She appeared in the film with Fernando Poe Jr., whose brother, Andy Poe, she later married.

I love this photo by Noche Zaldarra, because it brings back memories of those dangerous years—when theater helped keep the peace on campus and paved the way for many academic future-movement!

## Fair Trade Summer Blast sale at ManoMano

FROM APRIL 4 to May 8, the Manobinee Filipino arts and handicrafts store at 2504 Lemoyne st., Sta. Ana (near Sta. Ana Church) is holding its annual Fair Trade Summer Blast sale, with up to 50 percent discounts on its wide variety of beautiful decor, furniture and accessories from all over the country. Being a fair Trade store, ManoMano has the welfare of its workers in mind, giving them decent salaries and other benefits.

SAMYOL Cabana now DJ'ing

Joining the trade fair: Café 1821, 888-2886/cel 7221-8771 to 75.

## MONTAGE

### Nicktoons at Global City

On April 9 at 2 p.m., meet and greet your favorite Nicktoon characters at Nickelodeon's Nick World at the Bonifacio Global City Open Field. Admission is free!

Fun activities include a storytelling session about the adventures of Dora, the Explorer, as well as story times and fun, funny friends in a special animal show. Kid-martial artists will perform cool moves with lumps of dough. And, enjoy a special screening of the new Nickelodeon show, "The Fairorite of Jacob."

Rides fun at Spongebob's Jellyfishing Trampoline, the Glass Slide and the A-Own-Ball inflatable! Join great games and enjoy tunes, and win prizes, too! See you from 2 to 6 p.m. at Nick World!

### On Star Movies

April 3, "Prince of Persia" starring Jake Gyllenhaal. April 10, "September 30," with Robert Sheehan. April 17, "The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus." April 24, "The Men Who Stare at Goats," starring George Clooney and his injured son van Goddam.

### Vigan food and trade fair

Ongoing until April 3 is the Vigan Food and Trade Fair at Villa Fernandina de Vigan, Taguig City, with 25 exhibitors from the provinces of Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte showcasing their products and delicacies. Open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

### Oprah's farewell season

The farewell season of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" premieres on 2nd Avenue at 6 p.m. on April 4. Special guests this season include Jada Pinkett-Smith, Barbra Streisand, Diana Ross and Nicole Kidman.

### 'All Aboard! Pinoy Abroad!'

Starting April 2 at 8 p.m. on ANC90 Radyo/Smart/ANC, ANC90 Teleradyo SkyCable Ch. 23, DTC (The Filipino Channel) and on live streaming at TFC Now (www.tfcnow.com), the new show, "All Aboard! Pinoy Abroad!," will serve as a forward informative platform and provide advice and for Pinoys all over the world.

Anchored by Alex Santos and Maricrist Tan, it's the first OFW show that has segments that feature only current Pinoys to one another.

### Edu hosts new 'Family Feud'

Beginning April 4 on GMA 7, "Family Feud" returns to weekday TV at 10:30 a.m., M-F, with new TV personalities, Edu Manzano, hosting. Now titled "Pera-Pera Feud: The Showbiz Edition," the program features a wider selection of contestants, bonus games and prizes, and other exciting innovations.

### Alex Seguerra

Alex Seguerra performs with Ava Milne and Siri in a concert on April 30, 8 p.m. at Blackbird.

## 'Teleserye culture' overwhelms the TV screen

By Nestor U. Torre

SOME VIEWERS may not be aware of it, but we're in the middle of a new revolution or convolution itself it a "convolution" that has clearly but easily been changing the local video landscape. Minority "culture" has taken over much of our primetime TV hours. Our tomorrow you almost needs, viewers with our enervated senses after another, most of them at the unnatural, fantasy or "romantic fantasy" suit.

Lists another new word and call it "teleflex," if you please. But tomorrow you almost needs, teflic it, the new image (and sense) could has upstaged many other program topics and it will on its way to replace nostalgia as the nation's communal way of getting its entertainment fix.

We call it a new pop culture as antecedents, because of its overwhelming pervasiveness and popularity. Yet, it is to have antecedents, because the images it so persuasively tells have little to do with how we really are, or should be.

### Emphasis

For one thing, it tells viewers into yearning to escape from their problems and realities, instead of more positively confronting them. Its emphasis on idealized romance and "tender" human frailties distances it from reality, subverting an entire universe of documented viewers into inaction.

We have it in juice hologists and other social scientists to quantify how much into "teleflex" relevance have softened our collective backbone as a people, and corroded our national vision into—well, believing, at best, if you're attentive to the signs of incipient destruction and escapist ruin, they're all over the place.

When fantasy takes over, all problems can be magically "solved" by the most unusual appearance of a superhero, dance or at least an machine device. So, why bother doing anything to resolve your problems, dilemmas and contradictions in the real world? Simply focus, rest and they'll go away (until the next commercial break).

With more than 20 different teleseryes playing on TV each and every day, the essential dispersion of reality has been rendered more and more academic—even on "reality" shows and in newscasts. Some "news" items are now being emotionally tweaked to come off like mini-teleseryes, complete with the requisite frustration at the police procedures—etc!

### Psyche

What can be done before "teleseryes culture" takes its over-whelm and transforms the nation's psyche?

First, our TV people should realize the negativity and semi-impressionistic of the two forty some of their hour-to-"teleseryes-only" format.

And, second, all of us who perceive television through our the TV programming day and night should make our orders count: aware of the negative effect of all this fantastic eating-escapism!

MAR 80